Lud. Du Guernier inv. et Sculp.

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ELECTRA,

A

TRAGEDY.

Tranſlated from the Greek of

SOPHOCLES.

Qui legis Electran, egentem mentis Oreſtem,
Ægiſthi crimen, Tyndaridoſq; legis Ovid. Triſt. l. 2.
Et vindex in matre patris malus ultor Oreſtes. Ov. Am. l. 1.

LONDON:

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ELECTRA,

A

TRAGEDY.

BRITISH MUSEUM

To the Right Honourable

CHARLES

Lord HALLIFAX.

AS the Deeds of the Great have ever been the Subject, ſo their Patronage has ever been the Claim of Poetry.

None of them has exerted himself oftner and more generously in his Favour to the Muses, than your Lordship, with this farther Advantage, that none has a Superior *Genius* and a Nicer Judgment in all Performances of this kind. This Essay towards an *English* Version of a *Greek* Play, being unable to abide the Latter,

ter, ſtands conſequently in moſt need of the Former. *Sophocles*, that Excellent Improver of the *Athenian* Stage, had been proud to have obtained your Applauſe, and glad to have found a Man, who could not only protect, but reliſh him. This Tranſlation of his *Electra* caſts it ſelf upon your Mercy alone, and

hopes for your Pardon of all its faults; and I ſhall venture to proſecute the ſame thro' the reſt of his Plays, if your Lordſhip will be pleaſed to excuſe and ſhelter this firſt Attempt of,

My LORD,

Your Moſt Humble,

and Moſt Obedient Servant.

THE PREFACE.

THAT ſort of Poetry, which repreſents Action upon the Stage, was always attended with thoſe two excellent Qualities, to Pleaſe and to Profit. Thoſe Scenical Repreſentations were of two kinds, Tragedy and Comedy; the firſt of which was ever accounted to be the nobleſt, and to exceed the other, as much as Princes do Plebeians. Beſides, the ſolemn Gravity of the Tragick Action is never, in the Ancient Poets ſully'd and debaſed by the Ludicrous and frequently Smutty Jeſts and Expreſſons which are fit for the Mouths of none but that Rabble, and thoſe ſcurrilous Rakes, that often and moſtly bear a Part in a Comedy. A great part of not only the Morals, but of the Divinity of the old Heathens, is delivered in their Tragedies: the brighteſt Characters of their Virtues, are in them painted and ſet off in their beſt Colours for Imitation; and the Deformities of Vice are expoſed, with all their odious Circumſtances, to deter the Beholders from the Commiſſion of it; that, as the Beauties of the firſt muſt excite Love, ſo the Uglineſs of the other may breed

an Averſion in the Minds of Men. In ſhort, their Tragedies ſerved but as ſo many Publick Leſſons, or Sermons, to inſtruct the People in Religion and good Manners: And it were to be wiſhed, that all our modern Plays were reduced to ſuch a laudable end; then our Stage would not lie open to the Scandal it has of late ſuffered under! then the frequenting of it would be looked upon as the beſt Education; whereas to ſeveral unwary young Men, who ſtand not upon their guard, it proves a Snare, and a School of Wickedneſs and Debauchery.

Mr. *Dacier*, in his learned Preface to his Traduction of *Ariſtotle*'s Poetry, has very well obſerved, that the Ancient Tragedy, ſuch as is agreeable to that great Philoſopher's Rules, is the moſt uſeful and neceſſary of all Diverſions: It teaches us to be wary, to moderate our Paſſions, and to ſhun all thoſe Ways and Practices, which are lively before our Eyes exemplified to have been the Ruin of Men in former Ages.

A meer Hiſtory may pleaſe us in the reading, but that Pleaſure is faint and cold, and leaves the Reader, at beſt, but in an Indifference. But the Tragedy invigorates and enlivens the Action, it engages all the Senſes of the Spectator, it makes him a Party concerned, it touches his Soul to the quick, it tunes it to ſuch a pitch that it ſympathizes with every Ebb and Flow of the Actor's Paſſion; it has often ſuch an Influence upon the Mind, that the Beholder really feels that Paſſion which the Actor but counterfeits: It is able to awaken the moſt vicious, and to make an Impreſſion upon the hardeſt Hearts. 'Tis reported of *Alexander* the *Pheraan*, a moſt cruel and ſavage Tyrant, that on a time he commanded *Euripides*'s *Hecuba* to be acted before him; with the Action of which he felt himſelf ſo ſoftned and melted, that he went away before the firſt Act was ended; ſaying, 'That it 'would be too great a Shame and Reflection upon 'him, to be ſeen weeping for the Miſeries and Cala-

'mities

‹ mities of *Hecuba* and *Polyxena*, when he bathed
‹ himſelf daily in the Blood of his Subjects.

Thus this bloody Man was afraid, leſt the Spirit of Cruelty ſhould quit his relenting Heart, and he ſhould carry back with him Meekneſs out of that Theatre, which he had enter'd a Tyrant. He had much ado to forbear giving Orders for the Death of the Actor, who had gain'd ſuch an Aſcendant over his untamable Paſſion; and the innocent Criminal ow'd his Life to thoſe remains of Pity which had been his Crime. I have brought this Inſtance, to prove the mighty Power which Tragedy hath over Mens Natures, and, conſequently, to juſtifie the great and good uſe of it, where it is rightly applied.

This is the Reaſon why the *Greek* Tragedians were ſo eſteemed in their own, as well as in after-Ages. Their Theatre was a School, where Virtue was more effectually taught than in thoſe of the Philoſophers. But if we had a mind now uſefully to follow their Steps, there would be need to re-eſtabliſh the Uſe of their Chorus; whereby an occaſion is given to inſtil, by the Charms of Muſick, into the Minds of the Hearers thoſe Sentiments of Virtue and Goodneſs from the ſeveral Characters which are introduc'd in the Play. Thus, inſtead of thoſe idle Songs brought in often, without any Coherence with the Action, to patch up our Plays; the intermediate Chorus would ſerve both as an Eaſe and Diverſion, and as a Moral to the Fable of the foregoing Act. Thus Muſick, that moſt delightful and ſoothing Art, inſtead of cloying our Ears, crouding our Theatres and ſhutting out good Senſe, would no longer be abus'd, but be improved in carrying on the main deſign of the Tragedy, which is to take the Soul as well as tickle the Ears, and to pleaſe the Underſtanding and Judgment, as well as the Fancy. Then Muſick might have the ſame Effect upon us, as *Polybius* relates it had upon the *Arcadians*, who by it were civiliz'd, and were

taught Humanity, Sweetneſs, and Reſpect for Religion.

I can't tell that *Electra* has yet been made *Engliſh*. Mr. *Dacier* has oblig'd the Publick with a learned *French* Traduction of that and *Oedipus*. In mine I have aim'd at following the *Greek* Original the neareſt I can; at leaving no Word unexpreſs'd, helping the Senſe with the Expoſition of the *Greek* Scholiaſt or Commentator, where-ever I found it neceſſary.

I can't paſs by a remarkable Story deliver'd by *Gellius*, concerning one *Polus* a famous Actor of *Greece*, who having bury'd a Son he entirely loved, forbore his Trade awhile; but after ſome time, when his Sorrow was pretty well worn out, reſum'd it again. It was then his Part to Act at *Athens Electra* carrying the Urn as it were with the Remains of her Brother *Oreſtes*. For the Argument and Plot of the Fable is ſo contriv'd that ſhe, as if ſhe really bore the Aſhes of *Oreſtes*, laments his loſs who was ſuppos'd to have dy'd a violent Death. This *Polus* therefore dreſs'd in the mourning Weeds of *Electra*, took his own Son's Bones and Urn and embracing them inſtead of thoſe of *Oreſtes* fill'd the whole Aſſembly with real Weeping and Lamentation; and that Sorrow which he came only to Counterfeit and Act, was turned into a true and natural one.

Sophocles the Author of this Play, is reported by *Suidas* to have been born in the 73d *Olympiad*, 17 Years before *Socrates*; but *Diodorus* and *Euſebius* make him older by 27. *Diodorus* writes that he dy'd in the 3d Year of the 93d *Olympiad* aged 90 Years. And therefore he was born in the 1ſt of the 71ſt *Olympiad*, that is, in the Year of the World 3454 under the Reign of *Darius*, 257 Years before our Saviour.

Socrates was born (according to *Diogenes Laertius*) in the 4th Year of the 77th *Olympiad*, of the World 3481, that is 27 Years after *Sophocles*.

Tully

Tully writes That *Sophocles* made Plays even when he had attain'd the utmoſt verge of old Age; and that when he ſeem'd to neglect the Concerns of his Family for the ſake of his Study, his Sons made application to the Judges, that he might no longer be truſted with the Management of his Affairs ſince he was diſabled through Dotage. Then the old Man having repeated openly in Court *Oedipus Coloneus*, a Play, which he happen'd to have about him, and the laſt he had written, ask'd *Whether this look'd like the Work of a Dotard?* Whereupon he was acquitted by the unanimous Judgment of the Court.

Since every Fable or Play is ever grounded upon Hiſtory I ſhall (according to *Ariſtotle*'s Method) deliver the plain naked Hiſtory and afterwards repreſent it clothed with its additional fictititious Ornaments, or Poetical Epiſodes.

Dictys of *Crete* in his ſixth Book of the *Trojan* War, writes, That *Clytemneſtra* being by falſe Reports incens'd againſt her Husband *Agamemnon*, was debauch'd by *Ægiſthus* whom ſhe afterwards marry'd, and with him plotted againſt *Agamemnon* and ſlew him, when he was return'd Home from the *Trojan* War. In the mean time *Talthybius* ſav'd *Oreſtes*, *Agamemnon*'s Son, from the Hands of *Ægiſthus*, and truſted him with *Idomeneus* at *Corinth*. *Oreſtes* having ſpent there his younger Years and being now grown a Man begs an Equipage of *Idomeneus* with leave to go to *Athens*; whither when he was come, he deſires help againſt *Ægiſthus*. Thence he went to conſult the Oracle, and was anſwer'd that he ſhould kill his Mother and *Ægiſthus*, and recover to himſelf his Father's Kingdom. Then he betook himſelf to *Strophius* of *Phocis* whoſe Daughter *Ægiſthus* had firſt marry'd and abus'd ſince by his Match with *Clytemneſtra*. *Strophius* therefore, and *Oreſtes*, both full of Reſentments for the Injury done to the Daughter of the one and Father of the other, join'd their Forces, and came to *Mycena*. At

their

their coming, they met not with *Ægisthus*, but with *Clytemnestra*, whom they slew, and as many as resisted them. Then they laid wait for *Ægisthus* at his return set upon him unawares and slew him.

Velleius Paterculus, in the first Book of his History, saith, that *Ægisthus*, after he with *Clytemnestra* had kill'd *Agamemnon*, reign'd over *Mycena* seven Years. That then *Orestes* with his Sister *Electra*, a Woman of a Manly Courage, and the trusty Partner of all his Counsels and Designs, kill'd them both. He lived 90 Years, and reigned 70; *Eusebius* writes he only reigned 17, but *Lipsius* would have it 65. *Gerard Vossius* maintains the 17 Years of *Eusebius*. Yet if the *Greek* Argument of the Play is right, which tells us *Orestes* return'd to *Argos* 20 Years after his Father's Murther, and seems to be favoured by *Dictys*, that must contradict the 70 Years of *Ægisthus*'s Reign. However, tho' the Years of *Orestes* be very uncertain (as most things are with relation to Chronology in that *tempus ἀδηλον*, that Fabulous uncertain Age,) yet we may be sure that *Agamemnon*'s Murther must have happen'd soon after the taking of *Troy*, which fell in the Year of the World 2766. So much for the plain History upon which the Play is grounded. Now I proceed to the Fable and Tale of the Play.

Orestes, with his Governor and his Friend *Pylades*, returning to *Mycena*, resolves (as he had been directed by *Apollo*'s Oracle) to set upon his Father's Murtherers not by open Force, but Craft and Cunning. He therefore bids the Governor feign himself to come from *Phocis* with the Counterfeit News of *Orestes*'s being kill'd through a Mischance at the *Pythian* Games; while he with *Pylades* (still with Obedience to *Apollo*'s Commands) pays a Visit to his Father's Tomb, to appease his Ghost with usual Libations, and to offer up there a Lock of his Hair; and then they would come with the Urn in their Hands to confirm the News of *Orestes*'s Death, as if they had been sent

by

by *Strophius* (whom *Oreſtes* in his Youth had been truſted to) on a Meſſage, to have the Remains of the Deceaſed Buried in his own Country. As ſoon as they go each upon their ſeveral Errands, *Electra* comes forth, and complains of the miſerable Life ſhe leads, and the Sorrows ſhe endures, the Tears ſhe ſheds Night and Day for the inhuman Murther of her Father by her Mother and the Adulterer *Ægiſthus*. Then the *Chorus* of *Mycenæan* Matrons apply themſelves to her, with a deſign to aſſwage her Grief, repreſenting how that all Lamentations were vain, ſince they could not call back the Dead from the Grave, and that ſhe was not the only Perſon involved in that Miſery. She rejects all Comfort, laying out the aggravating Circumſtances of her Condition; as her Dependance for her Bread on her Father's Murtherers, her being Eye-witneſs of her Mother's Revels every time the Day of *Agamemnon*'s Maſſacre returns, and her being continually revil'd and inſulted by her through the Inſtigation of *Ægiſthus*; who ſo cruelly uſes her, that ſhe could not now go out of Doors and vent her Grief, were it not that he is abſent from Home; and laſt of all, that ſhe is weary of looking for *Oreſtes*, who ſtill delays his coming. While *Electra* thus paſſionately and loudly breaks her Grief, her Siſter *Chryſothemis* going out interrupts her, ſhews her the apparent Danger ſhe expoſes her ſelf to by theſe too free and open Complaints, whereas ſhe ought to ſubmit and give way rather than contend with a ſuperior Power. *Electra* lets looſe moſt bitter Invectives at her Siſter, while the *Chorus* ſtrives to moderate between them. *Chryſothemis* friendly forewarns her of what is deſigned againſt her at *Ægiſthus*'s Return, if ſhe will not forbear her Clamour; that ſhe is to be ſent far away, and ſhut up by her ſelf in a dark Solitary Cave under Ground. She, far from being frighted, ſeems to hug and long for her Puniſhment; and calls her Siſter Traitreſs and Coward, who finding her Words to have no effect on *Electra*'s Paſſion,

Paſſion, leaves her, and goes where ſhe was bid to carry ſome Oblations ſhe had in her Hands. *Electra*, impatient and curious of knowing her Errand, calls her back, and enquires what Buſineſs ſhe was about. *Chryſothemis* relates to her *Clytemneſtra*'s Viſion, how *Agamemnon* had in the Night appeared to her, with his Scepter ſtuck in the Ground, from which ſprouted a Bough that over-ſhadow'd the whole Land of *Mycena*; that therefore ſhe, taken with a ſudden Fright, had ſent her with theſe Libations to *Agamemnon*'s Tomb, to attone her Dreams and avert whatever Ill they might forebode. *Electra* adviſes her to fling thoſe Expiations away, or to bury them under Ground, as things abominable and hateful to their Father's Ghoſt, and rather to preſent at his Tomb ſome of her Hair; and add to them, ſaid ſhe, thoſe few of mine, which are all I have left, and my poor Girdle: She withal begs her to put up her Prayers for *Oreſtes*'s Return. The *Chorus* commends *Electra*'s pious Advice, and *Chryſothemis* goes away to execute it. This finiſhes the firſt Act, and the *Chorus*, inſpired (as it were) with a Prophetick Genius foretels the due Rewards which Vengeance has in ſtore for theſe impious Wretches, *Clytemneſtra* and *Ægiſthus*.

Clytemneſtra, haunted with her Evil Conſcience, awakened with her laſt Night's Apparitions nor contented to have ſent *Chryſothemis* with Expiations, goes her ſelf with a Preſent of Fruits to *Apollo*, to engage him in her Favour, and rid her of her Fears. As ſhe goes out of Doors ſhe finds there Diſconſolate *Electra*, and takes an occaſion to juſtifie her Murther of *Agamemnon*, becauſe he had before Sacrificed her Daughter, *Iphigenia*. *Electra* confutes her Plea, ſhewing the Neceſſity of *Iphigenia*'s being Sacrificed to *Diana*, who being angry that *Agamemnon* had by chance kill'd her Stag, and bragg'd of it, ſtopt the Winds and the *Greek* Fleet at *Aulis*, and would not be pacified without ſuch a Victim; that therefore *Agamemnon* complied much againſt

againſt his Will, not to pleaſe, (as ſhe pretended) his Brother *Menelaus*; and beſides that, let *Agamemnon*'s Deed (only for Argument ſake) be ne'er ſo unjuſt 'twas none of her Buſineſs to lift up her Hand againſt her Husband; and if ſhe pleads that one Murther muſt be revenged by another, ſhe ought to take care of her ſelf, ſince it may be her Fate to be Condemn'd by her own Law. *Clytemneſtra* inraged with the Reflexions of *Electra* vows Revenge, as ſoon as *Ægiſthus* returns. Upon this, comes *Oreſtes*'s Governor, in the garb of a Stranger, inquiring for Queen *Clytemneſtra*, and (as he had at firſt receiv'd his Inſtructions) dreſſes up his feigned Story of *Oreſtes*'s Death with ſo many minute Circumſtances, and ſo particular an Account of the *Pythian* Horſe-Races, and in ſuch moving Terms, that the truth of it ſeeming undeniable ſtruck *Clytemneſtra* her ſelf, cruel as ſhe was, with a ſort of relenting Horror for the time, and flung amaz'd *Electra* into the utmoſt degree of Confuſion and Deſpair; who, while *Clytemneſtra* takes in the welcome Meſſenger of theſe feign'd News to reward him, throws her ſelf down upon the Threſhold of the Palace-gate, complaining of her Mother's ſavage Barbarity, and wiſhing for ſome of her Enemies to diſpatch her out-right, and end her inſupportable Miſeries with her Life. Thus ends the ſecond Act, and the *Chorus* comes round about her to condole her; but her condition is ſuch, that, let the good Matrons ſtrive never ſo much to Parallel her Caſe, ſhe convinces them that it is ſingular and without an Example. During this *Chryſothemis* had (as *Electra* had adviſed her) gone to *Agamemnon*'s Tomb, with the Preſent of their Hair and the Girdle. But *Oreſtes* with *Pylades* had before been there already, and offer'd up likewiſe ſuch a preſent of Hair; which *Chryſothemis* finding, and obſerving to be but newly cut, concludes that it muſt come from *Oreſtes* himſelf; and runs back to her Siſter with thoſe joyful News; who ſoon acquaints her with the woful Meſſage

of

of *Oreſtes*'s Death brought by one who had been an Eye-witneſs, and that the Hairs ſhe had ſeen had been placed there as Tokens of the ſame. *Electra*, from the extremity of Anguiſh and Deſpair, is fired into Revenge, and makes her Siſter a propoſal of killing *Ægiſthus*. *Chryſothemis* refuſes to aſſiſt her in an Attempt ſo unpracticable and unlikely to ſucceed, and end any other ways than with their utter Deſtruction. The two Siſters part Quarrelling; and the *Chorus* bewailing their falling out, yet applauding *Electra*'s Courage, and wiſhing her Succeſs, concludes the third Act.

Oreſtes with his Friend *Pylades*, having paid his Duty at his Father's Tomb, goes now (as he had at firſt reſolved) to *Clytemneſtra*'s Palace with the Urn (which was to be ſuppoſed to contain his Aſhes) to ſecond the Report, which his Governor (who was within) had already ſpread. Being come to the Gates he finds there the *Mycenæan* Women with *Electra*; and having firſt (as feigning himſelf a Stranger) ask'd them whether this was *Ægiſthus*'s Palace, he deſires ſome of them to carry the News within that ſome Men from *Phocis* were ſent to him by old *Strophius* concerning *Oreſtes*. *Electra* had no ſooner heard that Name, but ſhe trembled with Fear, and yet could not forbear being inquiſitive; ſo true it is, that 'tis leſs grievous to be ſure than to be doubtful of one's Misfortunes. *Oreſtes* tells her the Urn contains the Remains of her Deceaſed Brother. She in a Rapture of Sorrow takes and hugs it with paſſionate Exclamations and Apoſtrophe's to her Brother whoſe Death ſhe thought her ſelf at laſt convinced of and whoſe dear Aſhes ſhe fancied to have in her Arms. The *Chorus* on the one ſide gives her Advice to ſubmit to what ſhe can't help: *Oreſtes* on the other pities her Caſe, having firſt (as if he had not known it) informed himſelf of the Matrons that ſhe was *Electra* that famous Beauty; he weeps, and by that ſhew of Tenderneſs and Compaſſion moves her to relate to him the Story of her Miſ-

fortunes,

fortunes, but can by no Perſuaſions make her quit the Urn; ſhe holds it faſt, and waters it with her Tears, till *Oreſtes* having by degrees work'd her Paſſion, and prepar'd it to receive the joyful unexpected Secret he was about to reveal, diſcovers himſelf, and tranſports her from the deepeſt Grief to the moſt exceſſive Joy; which ſhe has hardly the Power to ſuppreſs, had not her Brother *Oreſtes* ſhew'd her the neceſſity of keeping it in for the preſent, leſt the diſcovery thereof might hinder their Deſigns. *Electra*, the Women telling her they heard the noiſe of ſome body within at the Gate, is immediately huſh'd; and reſuming her former ſorrowful Countenance, beſpeaks *Oreſtes* and *Pylades* as if they had been Strangers, and bids them go in and deliver the Meſſage. The Noiſe they had heard at the Gate was occaſion'd by *Oreſtes*'s Governor coming out, who chid them for being ſo loud, that they had like to have been overheard and ſpoil'd the whole Deſign. Here a ſecond Diſcovery is made to *Electra* by *Oreſtes*; That this old Governor was the very Man whom ſhe had entruſted *Oreſtes* with, when ſhe ſav'd him from the danger of being Murther'd, together with his Father. This gives freſh ſprings to her Joys; but this was not a time to vent them: The Work agreed on is to be done; they therefore all go into the Palace with *Electra*, who firſt prays to *Apollo* to ſpeed the Work; and the *Chorus* of the Women entertaining themſelves with what they foreſee will come to paſs within, cloſes the Fourth Act.

Electra being ſent out again by her Brother to watch for *Ægiſthus*'s Return, leſt he ſhould come upon 'em unawares, comes out to the *Chorus*, and acquaints the Women, that *Oreſtes* is going to execute his Enterprize, while *Clytemneſtra*, little expecting what was to follow, makes ready ſome kind of a Funeral for the Bones and Aſhes of *Oreſtes*, whom ſhe did not think to be ſo near her. In the mean time they hear the Cries of *Clytemneſtra* within, whom *Oreſtes* was Murthering.

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He after that steps out to acquaint his Sister with what he had done; but the Women spying *Ægisthus* coming, he hastens in again to be ready to receive him. *Ægisthus*, whom *Clytemnestra* had before, some way or other, inform'd of these pretended Strangers coming, and of their Message, returns full of Joy, and the first thing he does, is, to insult *Electra*, who was at the Gate of his Palace. *Electra* humours him, and feeds his Expectation, that the Disappointment might afterwards prove the more bitter. 'You may now, *saith* 'she, glut your Sight with what you have all along 'been desirous to see, dead *Orestes*.' *Ægysthus* impatient of Delays, and thinking every Moment an Age till he saw it, bids the Palace-Gates be wide open, that the Spectacle may be more Publick; they are opened immediately, a dead Body cover'd appears lying on the Floor, *Orestes* and the rest of the Company standing by: *Ægisthus* approaching the Body, which he did not doubt but to be *Orestes*'s, bids it be uncover'd, but first to call *Clytemnestra* to him. *Orestes* then, while he was swell'd with Hope, and top-full of Joy with this imaginary good Fortune, blasts his Mirth in its highest Glory and Prime, uncovers the Body, and bids him behold his *Clytemnestra*: Then drives him before him to be slain within, in the very Chamber where *Agamemnon* had been by him formerly Murther'd. The *Chorus* briefly applauds the Success, and congratulates the Family of *Atreus*, Father of *Agamemnon*, upon their being deliver'd from *Ægisthus*'s and *Clytemnestra*'s bloody Tyranny.

The

The ARGUMENT.

AN old Man, the Governor formerly of Oreſtes, *relates to him all that had been done at* Argos. *For* Electra *had ſtol'n away her Brother* Oreſtes, *being but little, leſt he ſhould be ſlain with their Father* Agamemnon, *and deliver'd him into the Hands of that old Man, who carried him into* Phocis, *to one* Strophius: *and twenty Years after returns with him to* Argos: *Where* Oreſtes *revenges his Father's Murder.*

Dra-

The Persons of the Play.

THE *Governor of* Orestes.
Orestes, *Son of* Agamemnon *and* Clytemnestra.
Clytemnestra, *Wife of* Ægisthus, *after* Agamemnon's *Murther*.
Electra, } *Sisters to* Orestes.
Chrysothemis, }
Ægysthus, *King of* Myconæ.
Pylades, *Friend to* Orestes, *a mute Person*.
The Chorus *of* Mycenian *Women*.

The SCENE *Mycena*, a City of *Argos* in *Greece*.

ELE-

ELECTRA.

ACT I. SCENE I.

The Governor, and Oreſtes. Pylades, *a Mute Perſon.*

GOVERNOR.

Oreſtes, Son of that *Agamemnon*, who formerly led an Army at the Siege of *Troy*, you may now with your own Eyes ſee thoſe things you were ever deſirous to behold. For this is the Ancient Town *Argos*, which you wiſh'd to be acquainted with; that is the Grove of *Io* the Daughter of *Inachus* who was, thro' *Juno*'s Jealouſie, ſtung into Madneſs by a Hornet; there is the *Lyceum*, or Publick Place of *Apollo* the Deſtroyer of Wolves; here on the Left is the famous Temple of *Juno*. From this Place whither we are come, you have a View of wealthy *Mycene*, and the Seat of the *Pelopidæ*, where ſo many Murthers have

have been committed. Thence, when your Father was ſlain, I brought you, taking you from the Hands of your own Siſter; I preſerv'd and bred you up ever ſince, 'till now you are of Age to revenge your Father's Blood. Now then, *Oreſtes*, and you *Pylades*, the deareſt of all Friends, ye muſt adviſe what is to be done, and ſpeedily; for already the bright Beams of the Sun call forth the early Birds to ſalute the Morning Light with their clear Notes; the black Night with the Stars has given place to the Day. Conſer therefore together before any one ſteps out of the Houſe; this is the very nick of time, no more delays, but proceed to ſome Action.

Oreſt. O truſtieſt of all my Attendants, what plain Inſtances do you give me of your Good-will and Faithfulneſs? As an Horſe of a generous breed, tho' grown old, loſes nothing of his Courage in the time of Battle, his Ears are up and attentive to the leaſt Noiſe; ſo you ſtir us on, and follow your ſelf in the foremoſt Ranks. Therefore I'll declare what is my Opinion; Let your Ears be quick; and if I fall ſhort of hitting the preſent Opportunity, let your Counſel ſet me right again. When I went to the Oracle at *Delphos*, and enquir'd which way I ſhould revenge my Father's Death upon his Murtherers, *Apollo* bid me do it, not with Arms and open War, but by Subtilty and Cunning. Therefore, in Compliance with his Anſwer, take your time, and go into that Houſe, and when you have inform'd your ſelf of every thing that has been there tranſacted, bring us Word back again. None can know you after you have been abſent ſo long; your Age and grey Hairs will make you paſs unſuſpected. Beſides, you ſhall pretend to be a Stranger of *Phocis*, ſent from *Phanoteus*, one of their chiefeſt Confederates. Tell them, and ſwear to it, that *Oreſtes* dy'd violently, thrown out of his Chariot in the *Pythian* Games. Let this be your Tale and Meſſage. We in the mean while, as *Apollo* order'd, will

go

go to my Father's Tomb, there to pour out Offerings, and ſpread over it our torn Hairs. Then we'll return hither, and bring with us the Braſs Urn, which thou know'ſt is hid under yon buſhy Thicket; thus we'll make them believe (what they'll receive as joyful News) that I am dead, my Body burnt, and herein reduc'd to Aſhes. What need I be concern'd if I be reported dead, but really alive and ſafe and near upon getting great Reputation? I think nothing ill which is attended with an honeſt Gain. For I have heard of many wiſe Men, who, after they had been thought dead, have gain'd ſo much the more Honour, when they return'd back unexpected to their Families. So I truſt alſo my ſelf, ſoon after this Report, to appear and ſhine forth like a Star, caſting its direful Influence upon my Enemies. But, O my dear Native Soil and Country-Gods, receive me kindly; may my Journey hither be proſperous. O my Father's Houſe be favourable; for thy ſake a n I come, ſent from the Gods to expiate thoſe Crimes wherewith thou art polluted. Send me not away diſhonourably out of this Land; but may I recover my Father's Poſſeſſions, and reſettle his Family. This is enough now: But go my old Friend, take ſpecial care of the Buſineſs. We alſo are going; this is the lucky Time, which in all Affairs is look'd upon by Men to be of the greateſt Conſequence and Moment.

SCENE II.

Electra, Governor *and* Oreſtes. Pylades *Mute.*

Elect. *within*] O me, O me, miſerable!

Gov. Methought Son I heard a deep Sigh of ſome of the Maid-Servants within.

Oreſt. Is not it poor miſerable *Electra*? Had not we beſt ſtay, think you, and learn the occaſion of her Groanings?

Gov. By no means. Nothing ought to prevent us from executing *Apollo*'s Orders; thence we muſt begin, and pay the juſt Dues to your Father's Ghoſt, by pouring out the expiatory Offerings at his Tomb; this will give us Courage in our Undertakings, and crown 'em with Succeſs.

SCENE III.

Electra.

O thou pure Light and Air, which equally compaſſeſt the Earth round, how often haſt thou heard my mournful Accents, and the Strokes of my Hands keeping time to them upon my Breaſts all bloody? Thus do I employ my ſelf from the very firſt Moment that the Darkneſs of the Night diſappears, till it returns again; and then how ſleepleſs and reſtleſs I continue the whole Night, is well known to my odious Bed in that wretched Houſe. How do I lament my unfortunate Father! It was not his Lot honourably to fall a Victim to Blood-thirſty *Mars* in a ſtrange Barbarian Land before *Troy*; but my Mother, and this Partner of her Bed, *Ægiſthus* cut off his Head, as the Woodmen fell a ſturdy Oak, with a bloody Axe. Yet none but my ſelf alone, of all this Family, bemoans thee, O my Father, thus unjuſtly and miſerably ſlain; but for my part I am reſolv'd never to give over my Complaints and bitter Wailings, while I ſee the bright Stars while I behold the Day. Still, like the Nightingale which has loſt her young, will I not ceaſe here before the Doors of my Father's Houſe to utter aloud to all Paſſengers my Grief. O gloomy Habitation of *Pluto* and *Proſerpine*, O Infernal *Mercury*, thou awful Curſe,

Curſe, and ye ſtern Furies, Daughters of the Gods, ye ſee them who die unjuſtly, and ſuch as fraudulently ſteal into others Beds. Come all then, aſſiſt me, revenge our Father's Death, and ſend me my Brother, for I'm no longer able alone to bear this weight of Sorrow, of which, were he preſent, he might carry his equal Share.

SCENE IV.

Chorus, Electra.

Cho. O *Electra*, Daughter——Daughter, alas! of a moſt wretched Mother, how do you here pine away with a perpetual unſatisfy'd Grief for *Agamemnon*, who awhile ago was catch'd in the treacherous Snares of your moſt impious Mother, and betray'd to be murther'd by a wicked Hand? May (if it be lawful to wiſh) the Author and Inſtrument of ſuch an horrid Deed periſh!

Elect. O ye the Off-ſpring of Noble Parents, ye are come to allay thoſe Miſeries under which I labour. All this I know and am very ſenſible of. Notwithſtanding I can't forget my unhappy Father, nor ceaſe therefore from grieving for his Misfortune, and my Loſs. O then, ſince ye have ever been ready to expreſs many ways your kind Affections to me give me leave here to indulge my Sorrows. Alas! alas! leave me to my ſelf, I entreat you.

Cho. You'll not be able, either by Moans or Prayers, to raiſe up your Father from the Grave, that common Receptacle of all Fleſh. And beſides, you deſtroy your ſelf through a continual Grief, which from moderate (as it ought to be) becomes at length inſupportable, in ſuch Misfortunes as are not to be reverſed. What Good is it for you to covet after Impoſſibilities, and give your ſelf over to that Exceſs of Sorrow which 'twill be very difficult to endure?

Elect. He wanteth his right Senſes, who forgets his Parents thus miſerably dead. It ſuits much more with my Inclination to imitate that diſtreſſed mournful Bird, *Jove*'s Meſſenger of the Spring, who is ever bewailing the Fate of *Itys*, her Son *Itys*. Ah *Niobe*, overwhelmed with the heavieſt of all Miſeries, I'll take you for my Pattern, or even for a Goddeſs, who, alas! alas! are always weeping in your Marble Monument.

Cho. You are not, Daughter, the only one of all Mortals, that hath ſeen Miſery. Why then do you grieve more than thoſe within, that are with you, and of the ſame Nearneſs of Blood; as your Siſters, which are alive, *Chryſothemis* and *Iphianaſſa*, and he, who (as you know) ſpendeth his Youth now mournfully, and in private?

Elect. Happy noble *Oreſtes*, who ſome time or other, through *Jupiter*'s kind Guidance and Direction, ſhall come to and be entertained by this renowned Country of the *Mycenaans*: Whom I long after, with an unwearied Expectation, hereabout wandering perpetually, miſerable, unmarry'd, childleſs, overflowing with Tears, having upon me a woful weight of endleſs Miſeries! But he forgets both how he has been treated by me and others, and what he has learned from me by ſeveral Meſſages. Elſe why ſhould he thus deceive me, ſending me Word about, and ſoothing me with the hope of his coming? He always expreſſes himſelf to be very deſirous of it, yet he vouchſafes not to afford me his Preſence.

Cho. Be of good cheer, truſt me, Daughter, great *Jove* is in Heaven, he beholdeth and ruleth all things. To him ſubmit your boundleſs Anger; and however you need not altogether forget the Injuries done you, yet let not your Paſſion againſt your Foes go beyond its due meaſure. The God *Time* will make all things eaſie; neither will the Son of *Agamemnon*, who dwelleth now at *Criſa*, in *Phocis*, fail of returning; nor will *Pluto*, the King of *Acheron* fail of returning a juſt Vengeance upon thoſe your Enemies. *Elect.*

Elect. But a great part of my Time is already paſt, and the end of my Hope never the nearer; neither have I ſufficient Ability to hold out any longer, pining away without any Iſſue to perpetuate my Memory, and without any Friend to ſtand up for me. I here drag a miſerable unworthy Life and ſojourn in my Father's Houſe as if I were ſome Stranger or Foreigner; dreſs'd up in theſe filthy Weeds, and often made to ſtand at an empty Table.

Cho. O the woful Report of your Father's Return from the Battle! O the woful Remembrance of that barbarous Deed, where he in his own Chamber was ſtruck by a Hatchet! O Wound, wherewith you are alſo your ſelf wounded! That Deed was contriv'd by Treachery that Murther executed through Love, unlawful wicked Love. What diſmal Idea and Imagination muſt needs have given birth to ſuch horrid Actions! What Man what Demon could ſuggeſt ſuch a Thought to them?

Elect. O that Day of all Days moſt hateful to and abhorr'd by me! O that Night! O that grievous, that horrible Supper, which I want Words to deſcribe, when my Father was unworthily butcher'd by the Hands of them two! Thoſe Hands have likewiſe robbed me of the Comforts of my Life betray'd me, ruin'd me. May the Great God of Heaven ſend 'em what Puniſhments they deſerve; may they never enjoy any of the Sweets of this Life who have hatch'd, and accompliſh'd ſuch unheard of Devices!

Cho. Take care you carry not your Words too far. Are you not ſenſible for what Reaſons theſe Domeſtick Calamities are now thus unworthily fall'n upon you? For you have heap'd upon your ſelf much Miſery, being always imbroil'd in Quarrels long of your impatient Temper. 'Tis not adviſeable to ſtrive with ſuch as are too ſtrong for us.

Elect. The grievous weight of my Miſeries forces me to it. I am ſenſible what Troubles my Anger in-

volves me in. But yet in such direful Calamities I can't forbear these Imprecations, while I breath. From whom, O dear Creatures, can I bear to hear any comfortable Word, any wise seasonable Advice? Leave me, leave me ye Comforters. These my Evils I may call endless, without the least hope of ever being freed from them. Never shall I cease here from my toilsom Grief: My Evils are without number, and my Complaints without measure.

Cho. But I speak to you out of pure good Will, and as a kind faithful Mother, advise you not to heap one Misfortune upon another.

Elect. And, pray, what Bound, what Intermission has there been to my Misfortunes? Again, is it a commendable thing to neglect dead Parents? Is there any Man born so hard-hearted? May I never get my self a creditable Name by such means; may I, tho' I were marry'd to never so good an Husband, never live with him so comfortably, as to stop the flights and breakings out of my shrill Lamentations, which I pay as an honourable Respect to my deceas'd Father. For if this my dead Parent, reduced to Earth, to nothing, must lie unreveng'd, and his Murtherers escape their deserv'd Punishment, farewel all Shame, Religion be henceforward banish'd from among Men.

Cho. I am indeed come, Daughter, both for your sake, and my own, to give you Comfort, and shew my Friendship. Let us then argue the Case; if what I propose be not right you shall prevail, and we'll follow.

Elect. I am ashamed, good Women, to appear in your Judgment, as if I gave my self up to too much and too intemperate Grief; but since Necessity drives me to it, I hope you'll excuse it. For how can a Woman well born do otherwise, when she beholds the Calamities of her Father's Family, which I perceive Day and Night increasing more than decreasing? First of all I have met with the most barbarous Treatment, from the Mother which bore me: Then in this House, where

where I have been born and bred, I am forc'd to converſe with my Father's Murtherers; I am commanded and inſulted by them, and what is worſe, it is from them I am fain to receive my Maintenance. Therefore what miſerable Life muſt I every Day lead, when I ſee *Ægiſthus* ſeated in my Father's Seat, wearing his Cloaths, and Sacrificing merrily to the Houſhold-Gods in the very Place where he ſlew him: When I ſee (which is the utmoſt Exceſs of their injurious Actions) this Murtherer in my Father's Bed with my wretched Mother, if I may yet lawfully call Mother her who can lie with ſuch a Villain! Yet ſtill ſhe goes on to keep him Company, having on her Spirits no dread of any avenging Furies; yea rather, as making her ſelf merry with theſe horrid Crimes, ſhe keeps the Day when my Father fell thro' their Treachery, with Mirth, Dancing and Feaſting and pretends to do Monthly Sacrifices to the Gods for her Safety; while I, in the mean while, beholding theſe things, poor unfortunate Woman, weep about the Houſe, pining away, and lamenting upon this Feſtival call'd by my Father's Name, being forc'd to ſuppreſs and keep in my Sorrow to my ſelf, for I have no liberty to vent it as much as my Mind deſires to do. For this goodly Woman, this Mother of mine, is always reproaching me with ſuch Words as theſe. O thou moſt odious Sight, to thee alone thy Father is dead; none elſe here is in Tears for him: May'ſt thou periſh with him, and may none of the Infernal Gods releaſe thee ever from thy Miſeries. Theſe bitter Railings ſhe purſues me with; and if ſhe chance to hear by any one of the coming of *Oreſtes*, then ſhe is ſtark Mad and Raving, then ſhe ſtands againſt and bellows at me, Art not thou the Cauſe of this? Is not this thy Contrivance, who craftily ſtoleſt *Oreſtes* out of my Hands? But be aſſur'd thou ſhalt dearly ſuffer for theſe things. Thus ſhe barks; and ſhe is egg'd on beſides by her worthy Husband ſtanding by, that Coward, that infamous Blot, who never

ſights but in Womens Company. I, alas! ſpend my ſelf in Sorrow, expecting *Oreſtes* to come and put an end to theſe Troubles; but ſtill he delays his coming, and fruſtrates all my Hopes, both preſent and future. In this deplorable Condition, dear Country-Women, there is no room for Wiſdom and Piety; in ſuch Miſeries Neceſſity puts us upon many things, which are ill and not juſtifiable.

Cho. Pray tell us now, dare you expreſs your ſelf thus while *Ægiſthus* is at Home? Or is he Abroad?

Elect. Ye may be ſure he is; was he near, I durſt not walk beyond the Threſhold; he's now in the Country.

Chor. If it be ſo, I'll then be free, and go on diſcourſing with you.

Elect. While he's away, you may ſpeak what you pleaſe.

Cho. Then give me leave to ask you, for I long to be inform'd, how ſoon you look for your Brother's Return, and what you think to be the Reaſon of his tarrying?

Elect. He ſays indeed he will come, but he has not yet made his Words good.

Cho. Whoever undertakes ſome great Enterprize, chuſes to be ſlow and deliberate, rather than too haſty.

Elect. But I was not ſlow and long deliberating, when I preſerv'd him.

Cho. Be of good cheer; he was ever a good Man, and will never fail his Friends.

Elect. Had not I buoy'd my ſelf up with this Hope, I could not have lived ſo long as till now.

Cho. Stop, ſay no more; for I ſee *Chryſothemis* your Siſter going out of the Houſe, carrying ſuch Funeral Offerings as are cuſtomary to be made for the Dead.

SCENE V.

Chryſothemis, Electra, *and the* Chorus.

Chriſ. What makes you, Siſter, hold theſe Clamorous Diſcourſes before theſe Doors? Has not Experience yet a long time taught you not to indulge your Fancy in this vain and unprofitable Behaviour? I (if I may be allow'd to know my ſelf) am heartily concerned alſo, and no leſs grieved for theſe preſent Accidents; even ſo far, that, were I able, I'd make them know how I ſtand affected to them. But now in ſo bad and dangerous a Storm I had better gather in my Sails, and not ſeem to attempt a Revenge without a ſufficient Ability to do them any harm. I wiſh you were thus minded, tho' your Judgment and Opinion appears at firſt ſight more equitable than mine: Yet, if I deſire to live and have my Liberty, I muſt ſubmit my ſelf to, and obey thoſe who have a Power over me.

Elect. Is not it very hard that you the Daughter of ſuch a Father, ſhould forget him, and take care rather to pleaſe ſuch a Mother? For I'm perſwaded that all this Advice to me, proceeds from her, not from you. Wherefore take your Choice, and own either that you are of a very ill and perverſe Diſpoſition, or elſe that you can at the ſame time both wiſh well to your Friends, and not remember them; when you ſaid juſt now that, if you were able, you'd ſhew your Abhorrence of thoſe People; and yet while I do all I can to revenge my Father's Death, you not

only refuse to help me, but dissuade me from doing it; Is not this to add Cowardice to your other evil Deeds? Wherefore let's argue the Point; either teach me, or learn of me. What Gain can it be to me, if I cease from these Complaints? Don't I live? Very miserably indeed, I know it; but it suffices me. Yet, however, by these my outward Expressions of Sorrow I grieve and vex them, and pay some Respect to the Dead, if there be any Sense of Gratitude in the Grave: But you, who pretend to me you hate, hate no farther than in Words for in Deed you keep a Correspondence and Familiarity with the Murtherers of our Father. As for me, were it to purchase those Gifts, with which you please and feed your Luxury, I would not crouch to them. Go to them, and partake of their rich Table and Entertainments, let your Life flow round and over with Pleasure; let my Food be only such as may be sufficient to appease biting Hunger; let this be my Feast, that I don't grieve my self by sitting at theirs. I neither envy you, nor desire to be thus honour'd; nor would you your self, if you were in your right Reason. You might then be called the Child of the best of Fathers, whereas now the Relation you affect and deserve most, is to be the Daughter of the worst of Mothers. Thus you'll appear to the World a wicked Woman, and most People will revile you for having betray'd your dead Father and your Friends.

Chor. Be not so furiously angry, for the Gods sake. There is some good to be got by both your Discourses, if each of you would but make a right use of the other's Words; you of hers, and she of yours.

Chrys. I am used, Country-women, to be treated by her in such Language; nor would I mention it ever, if I had not heard of, and did not foresee some great Evil coming to her, that will shorten the length of her Sorrows.

Elect.

Elect. And pray, what is this grievous Evil? If you can tell me any thing heavier than what I endure, I'll yield, and not reply.

Chryſ. I'll then acquaint you with all that I know. They have a Deſign, unleſs you forbear your Lamentations, to ſend you where you'll ne'er ſee the Light of the Sun, ſhut up in a dark Room under Ground far from this Land there to live and Chant your Miſeries by your ſelf. Think upon this; and when hereafter you ſuffer blame me not for I have forewarned you. Now is the beſt and faireſt Time and Opportunity for you to be wiſe.

Elect. Have they then decreed to deal with me thus?

Chryſ. Very true; and they'll put it off no longer but 'till *Ægiſthus* comes home again.

Elect. I matter it not; let him come as ſoon as he will; the ſooner the better.

Chryſ. Why do you talk ſo, poor Wretch? Is not this to curſe your ſelf?

Elect. Let him come, I ſay, if he's reſolved upon this.

Chryſ. Are you in love with Sufferings? Out of your Wits?

Elect. Yes; that I may fly from you all as far as 'tis poſſible.

Chryſ. Have you no regard for your preſent Life?

Elect. My preſent Life indeed is wonderful fine, pleaſant, and worth preſerving; think you?

Chryſ. But it might be ſo, if you knew how to be wiſer.

Elect. Don't teach me ſuch Wiſdom, as to be wicked and falſe to my Friends.

Chryſ. 'Tis none of that I'd teach you; but to give way to them who have the Maſtery over you.

Elect. Go you and cringe to them; for 'tis againſt my Nature to do't.

Chryſ.

Chryſ. 'Tis good not to be too Raſh; Raſhneſs has been the Fall of many.

Elect. Thus if it muſt be, let us fall, if we can but revenge our Father.

Chryſ. I make no queſtion but our Father will forgive us our want of Raſhneſs in this Caſe.

Elect. None but Cowards and ill Men can be of or applaud your Opinion.

Chryſ. Therefore you'll not be perſuaded by, and aſſent to me?

Elect. By no means. I'm not yet ſo bad.

Chryſ. Fare you well then. I'll go where I was ſent.

Elect. Whither are you going? Whither d'ye carry theſe Burnt Offerings?

Chryſ My Mother has ſent me to offer and pour them at my Father's Tomb.

Elect. How ſay ye? What? To him whom of all Men ſhe hated moſt?

Chryſ. Him, whom ſhe kill'd her ſelf. For you meant ſo.

Elect. Who of all her Friends adviſed her, and put her upon this?

Chryſ I think 'tis through ſome frightful Apparition ſhe has ſeen in the Night.

Elect. O all ye our Country's, Houſe's and Father's Gods, come now, be ready to aſſiſt me.

Chryſ Have you from this Fright of hers any Ground to build your Hope and Confidence upon?

Elect. I'll tell you, if you'll relate the Viſion.

Chryſ. What I know of it is but little.

Elect. Let it be never ſo little. Little Words and Things have often been the Ruin and Recovery of many Men.

Chryſ. It is reported that yours and my Father came this ſecond time to Life, appeared to and had ſome Diſcourſe with her; then that he took the Staff he was wont formerly to wear in his Houſe, (but now *Æ-*

giſthus

giſthus carries it) and ſtuck it in the Ground; that from the Top of it budded and grew up a flouriſhing ſpreading Bough, which cover'd with its Shade the whole Land of *Mycenæ*. Thus much I learn'd of one who was preſent, when ſhe told the Dream, and rehearſed it to the Sun as ſoon as it was Day. This is all I know, but that ſhe has ſent me on this Errand, becauſe of this Fright. By our Country Gods therefore I earneſtly intreat you to be adviſed by me, and not haſten on your Fall through Raſhneſs. For if you now reject me and my Counſel, it will afterwards be too late, when you'll come to't again driven by your Misfortunes.

Elect. But, O dear Siſter, of thoſe things you have in your Hands, let none come near and touch my Father's Tomb. Tis neither Juſt nor Pious to perform ſuch Obſequies, and theſe expiatory Libations to him, from the part of an Impious Woman and his Enemy. Either throw them into the Air to be carried out of ſight by the Wind, or elſe hide them deep in the Duſt, that none of them may ever approach my Father's Dormitory to diſturb his Reſt; but let theſe precious Offerings forſooth, be rather kept for her under Ground, againſt ſhe dies. Truly none but the moſt wretched and deteſtable Woman alive could have bethought her ſelf of pouring ſuch hateful Libations round the Urn of him whom ſhe ſlew. For conſider with your ſelf how kindly this dead Man is like to accept theſe Preſents offer'd up at his Monument from the Hand of her who unworthily and in an Hoſtile manner put him to Death cutting off and mangling his Limbs, and then over his Skull endeavouring to waſh away and wipe off the ſtains of his Blood. Seems it to you likely that any Waſhings and Purgations can ſet her free from the Guilt of that bloody Murther? No. Away therefore with them. Rather cut a Lock of Hair off your and my miſerable Head (a ſmall Offering this, but yet all I have;)

then

then go, preſent him with this poor Hair, and this my Girdle, deſpoiled both of their former gaudy Attire and Ornaments; fall down, and being proſtrate beſeech him to raiſe himſelf from under Ground, and afford us his kind Aſſiſtance againſt our Enemies and his, and grant that his Son *Oreſtes* may return alive, and with an high Hand fall upon his Foes, and tread them under his Feet, to the end that hereafter our Hands be better able to preſent him with richer Offerings. For I fancy, nay I am ſure, that he has ſtill ſome Care for the Concerns of his Family by frighting her with thoſe Fantoms, and ſending her ſuch hideous Dreams. However, Siſter, be in this, not only ſubſervient and ſerviceable to thee and me, but alſo obliging and grateful to the Memory of the beſt and moſt loving of all Men, our common departed Father.

Chor. The young Woman ſpeaks piouſly; and you her dear Siſter will act a wiſe Part, in doing what ſhe adviſes.

Chryſ. I will. The thing is ſo juſt as to admit no Diſpute between us, but rather requires a ſpeedy Performance. But while I go about it, in the name of the Gods, dear Women, I charge you to keep this as a Secret. For if my Mother ſhould come to know of it, ſhe would make this my Undertaking coſt me much Bitterneſs and Sorrow.

The End of the Firſt Act.

The Intermediate Chorus.

Strophe. If my foreboding Mind is not miſtaken, if its wiſe Foreſight fails not, methinks I ſee the Goddeſs Vengeance prophecying, ſtrengthening our Hands with a juſt Revenge. The time will not be long, Daughter. I have entertained a full and confident Hope

Hope of it, ever ſince I lately heard of thoſe Dreams, ſo ſweet and comfortable to us. Your Father, the late King of *Greece*, is not forgetful. Am I aſleep? Is this a Dream? Or I ſee that old two-edged Iron, that very Ax, which ſo ſhamefully and inhumanly hacked him, riſe up againſt them of its own accord.

Antiſtrophe. The Iron-heel'd avenging Fury, hidden hitherto in her diſmal Manſions, will come now, and with her many Feet and Hands overtake and ſeize that wicked Woman, who has thus broke through her Matrimonial Vows, and abuſed the Bridal Chamber and Bed with ſuch an unlawful Marriage, ſtain'd with Blood. Beſides all this, I'm poſſeſſed with a ſure Confidence, that we ſhall have no Occaſion to complain of this prodigious ominous Dream, but that it will fall heavy upon both the Actors and Abetters of this Murther. Either there is no ſuch thing as Faith to be had in Human Predictions from dire Dreams and Divine Revelations, or elſe this nightly Apparition portends us ſome good.

Epode. O unhappy ancient Riding of *Pelops*, how many Woes haſt thou brought upon this Land! For ſince *Myrtilus*, *Pelops*'s Coach-man, fell headlong out of the golden Chariot, whoſe Wheels he had treacherouſly left unpinn'd, and for that Treachery was by *Pelops* caſt into the Sea, this Family has never been free from all ſorts of Calamities.

ACT

ACT II. SCENE I.

Clytemneſtra, Electra, Chorus. Clytemneſtra's *Woman Mute.*

Clyt. IT ſeems then you're roving again up and down at your eaſe, becauſe *Ægiſthus* is away, who was wont to curb you, and hinder you from gadding out of Doors ſhaming and reviling our Friends. Now in his Abſence you've no Reſpect for me, and give it out to every Body how that I rule inſolently and unjuſtly, and with an imperious Haughtineſs abuſe both you and yours. I have none of that imperious contumelious Pride; and if I ſpeak Ill of you, 'tis but in return of the Ill Language I ſo often hear from you. As to your Father (for you never have any other Pretence) he died by me, by me, I ſay, and juſtly, I know it well; nor have I any Reaſon to deny it. Juſt Vengeance o'ertook him; ſo that Deed was not owing to me alone, whom if you had been wiſe, you ought to have aſſiſted in it. For that ſame Father of yours, whoſe Loſs you are continually bewailing, was the only one of all the *Greeks* ſo hardy and cruel as to Sacrifice your own Siſter to the Gods, having not felt when he got her thoſe Pangs I underwent when I brought her forth; but let that paſs. Tell me now for whoſe ſake he Sacrificed her? for the *Greeks*, ſay ye? But where's the Reaſon that my Daughter ſhould be ſlain for them? But he did it, may be, to gratifie his Brother *Menelaus*? Then ſince he killed mine, was it

it not juſt for me to have my Revenge? Beſides, had not *Menelaus* two Children born by the ſame Father and Mother, even by *Helen*, upon whoſe account that Fleet was ſet out, and that Expedition undertaken? Was not it more proper for them to die, than for mine? Or did *Pluto* hope to make a better Meal upon mine than hers? Or had that deſperate wicked Father leſs Care and Tenderneſs for the Children he got by me, than for *Menelaus* and his? Are not theſe the Sentiments of a very inconſiderate and inhuman Parent? This is my Opinion, tho' quite contrary to yours; and thus would dead *Iphigenia* ſpeak, if ſhe could. I am not at all concerned or ſorry for what has been done. But if you ſtill think me in the wrong, tho' I have Juſtice ne'er ſo much on my ſide, proceed with your Accuſation againſt me, and Impeach your neareſt Kindred.

Elect. You can't ſay now that I have been the Aggreſſor, and that I had not heard any thing from you, if I had not grieved you, and given you an Occaſion. Yet if you'll give me leave, I'll make an Apology for the dead, both for my Father and Siſter.

Clyt. You may; and if in ſpeaking to me you had always behaved your ſelf as now, you had never met with any unkind or harſh Treatment at my Hands.

Elect. Then I'll begin. Don't you own you ſlew my Father? And what Action can be more Villanous, whether it were done juſtly or no? Now I'll proceed, and make it out to you, how that you ſlew him unjuſtly, and through the Inſtigation of that wicked Man, whom you at preſent live with: Inquire of the Hunting Goddeſs *Diana* for whoſe Puniſhment ſhe ſtopt their Winds and would not let them Sail from *Aulis*. Or I'll tell you, ſince it is not reaſonably to be expected ſhe ſhould give you an Anſwer. My Father on a time (as I have been informed) ſporting about the Grove of the Goddeſs, with the Noiſe of his Feet ſprung a ſpeckled branchy Stag; whom having killed, he chanced to utter ſome vain-glorious Words;

for

for which the Daughter of *Latona* in grievous Anger detain'd the *Greeks*, 'till my Father ſacrificed his own Daughter in amends for the Murther of the Beaſt. Thus was the Sacrifice performed, without which the Army had had no Power and Liberty to ſtir, neither towards Home nor *Troy*. This was the Reaſon which obliged him, much againſt his Will, to yield her up, and not out of regard to *Menelaus*. If (for I'll ſuppoſe ſo much for Argument ſake, and to anſwer your Objection) he had done it to pleaſe and do his Brother a Kindneſs, has he therefore deſerved Death at your Hands? By what Law? Take heed, leaſt, by introducing this Law among Men, you repent hereafter, and ſuffer your ſelf by it. For if this Exchange be lawful to kill one for another, you may, if you have your due, chance to Die, and become the firſt Precedent of your new Law. Conſider therefore, for this Excuſe wherewith you would palliate your Crime, is no better, than none. Tell me now, if you pleaſe, why you continue to live in ſuch ſhameful Practices, and lie with that Aſſaſſin, who help'd you firſt to kill my Father, and get a ſpurious Brood by that curſed Adulterer, while you caſt out of Doors thoſe Pious Children, which you had before by a good and lawful Husband? How can I ſpeak well of theſe Actions? And will you perſiſt to ſay, that this is the method you take of revenging your Daughter? A very ſhameful one it is, if you are not yet aſhamed to own it. Is it good and juſtifiable to Marry with your Husband's and Family's Enemy, becauſe of a Daughter? Nor can any of us give you any ſound or wholſome Advice, but you open your Mouth, and cry out, that we ſpeak ill of our Mother. I for my part look upon you more like a tyrannizing Miſtreſs than a Mother, for I lead a miſerable Life, being continually abuſed and ill-treated by you and your Bed-Fellow; and your other Child, unfortunate *Oreſtes*, who hardly eſcaped your bloody Hands, ſpends his miſerable Days in Baniſhment;

nishment; whom you often accuse me for keeping, to the end he may imbrue his Hands in your Blood. And truly be assured of this, that had it been in my Power so to do, I had done it. Go therefore, if you list, and set me out to every one as a wicked foul-mouthed impudent Creature. For if I be expert in and guilty of these Practices, 'tis then a sign I'm your Daughter, since in this I neither disgrace nor degenerate from your Nature.

Chor. I perceive her to breath nothing but Anger and Fury; but I don't yet understand, whether she is in the right for being thus Transported.

Clyt. What Concern and Care ought I to have upon me about her, who thus reproaches and abuses me her Mother? Then consider her Age and mine; if she, but a Girl as it were, is so Impudent, what pitch of Boldness and Wickedness is she like, think ye, to grow up to in a longer time?

Elect. I assure you, whatever you may think of me, I am ashamed of these things, and sensible that what I do becomes neither me nor my Age: But your Barbarous Usage of me, and your ill Deeds force me to't, whether I will or no. Nothing but Ill can be learnt from an ill Example.

Clyt. O Impudent Creature, to say that I, and my Words, and my Deeds, make you thus outrageous!

Elect. And is it not so? They are your Words, not mine; they are your Deeds which have given Occasion to my Words.

Clyt. But, by Dame *Diana*, you shall not carry't off thus with your impudent Boldness, if *Ægisthus* does but come home.

Elect. See ye now, how you are transported with Anger: Altho' you gave me leave to speak my Mind, you have no Patience to hear it.

Clyt. Will you not then permit me to go on with my Sacrifice? Will you still, after I have let you speak all you will, interrupt me with your ominous Words, like a Bird of ill Luck?

Elect.

Elect. Ay, ay, go on; I permit you, I bid you; don't lay the Fault on me; I'll ſhut my Mouth, and ſay no more.

Clyt. to her Woman.] Here you, take theſe Fruit-Offerings from my Hands, while I lift up my Prayers to King *Apollo*, that he may free me from the Frights I now Labour under. O *Apollo*, whoſe Statue is here ſet up in the Front of this Houſe, as its Defender and Guardian, hear this my Prayer, which I ſecretly put up; for I dare not here ſpeak openly as among Friends, or reveal all my private Thoughts, while ſhe is preſent leaſt out of Spight and by the Noiſe of her ungovernable Tongue ſhe ſpread a vain and falſe Report of me all over the Town. But hear me, I beſeech thee while I ſhall deliver my Requeſt. Grant, King *Lycius*, that the two Dreams I had, and the Spectres I ſaw, laſt Night, if they are lucky, may ſoon be accompliſhed; if otherwiſe, turn whatever Evil they bode, from me upon my Enemies; ſuffer me not to fall and be thrown down from my preſent wealthy and proſperous Condition, through the Wiles of any who are Plotting againſt me. Grant me here a ſafe and undiſturbed Life, that I may manage the Affairs of the Houſe of *Atreus*'s Deſcendants, and proſper in the Adminiſtration of this Kingdom, converſing all my Days quietly with ſuch Friends as are now my Familiars and with ſuch of my Children as bear no Ill will or bitter Hatred againſt me, and make it not their Buſineſs to grieve me. Be propitious to me, and hear me, O *Lycius Apollo*; vouchſafe to give us all according as we pray. Thou art a God, I know; and therefore I make no doubt but that theſe and all other Neceſſities and Requeſts are known to you, even though I had not mentioned them; for they who are *Jupiter*'s Offſpring, muſt needs ſee all things.

SCENE

SCENE II.

The Governor of Oreſtes, *the* Chorus, Clytemneſtra, *and* Electra.

Gov. O Ye Women, Strangers to me, who can certifie me whether this be King *Ægiſthus*'s Palace?

Cho. This is it, Stranger, you your ſelf have gueſſed right.

Gov. And is that his Queen? Do I gueſs right? She ſhould be a Queen, by her Gate.

Cho. She is ſo; and here ſhe comes towards you.

Gov. O Queen, all hail; I bring both you and *Ægiſthus* a Meſſage from a Friend of yours.

Clyt. I welcome you, and embrace your Meſſage; but I would firſt know who ſent you.

Gov. Phanoteus of *Phocea* has ſent me to you with a Buſineſs of great Moment,

Clyt. What is it Stranger? For, I know, being ſent from a Friend, you can't but bring a friendly and acceptable Meſſage.

Gov. I'll deliver it in a few Words. *Oreſtes* is dead.

Elect. O miſerable me! now I am ruin'd.

Clyt. What is that you ſay? What is't, Stranger? Don't mind her.

Gov. What I ſaid and ſay is, that *Oreſtes* is dead.

Elect. Then am I loſt, Wretched! I am no more.

Clyt. Be gone, and mind your Buſineſs. But pray, Stranger, tell me truly, how he dy'd.

Gov.

Gov. 'Tis for that I was ſent; and I'll relate you the whole Story. This *Oreſtes* took an occaſion to go to *Greece*, that he might ſee the Celebrated *Pythian* Games at *Delphos*. As ſoon as the Herald with a loud Proclamation had uſher'd in the firſt of thoſe Games, which was the Race he came in ſet out in a ſplendid Dreſs, ſprightly and dazling the Eyes of all the Beholders; and as his Nature was equal to his Undertaking, he firſt reach'd the Goal, and went off with the honourable Prize of Victory. I can tell you but few of his many Deeds, for I never ſaw ſuch Action and Valour in a Man before. However, one Inſtance I'll let you know; that when the Publick Overſeers and Directors of the five ſorts of Games, which are performed uſually in that long and wide Space, had given the firſt Warning by a Proclamation he enter'd the Liſts, and carry'd the Prizes from all the reſt. Then he was follow'd with Acclamations; well done, cry'd the Multitude, calling him the Fortunate *Argive*, *Oreſtes*, Son of that *Agamemnon* who formerly gather'd together and led that noble Army of *Greeks* to the Siege of *Troy*. And ſo much for that. But when Heav'n is angry and reſolv'd to ruin any one be he never ſo valiant, 'tis not in his Power to eſcape the Deſtiny. This ſame *Oreſtes*, the next Day at Sun-riſing, when the ſwift Race of Chariots began, went in alſo with many other Charioteers who rivall'd one another for the Maſtery. The one was an *Achean*, another a *Spartan*, then two *Libyans* who were notable and experienced Drivers; after them he came in the fifth Rank with *Theſſalian* Horſes; the ſixth was an *Ætolian* with Bay Colts; the ſeventh a *Magneſian*; the eighth a *Thracian* of *Ænia* by Name *Leucippus* with white Horſes; the ninth a Citizen of *Athens* that famous City founded by the Gods and ſacred to *Minerva*; laſt of all a *Beotian* brought up the Rear, and drove the tenth Chariot. All ſtood ſtill while the Overſeers appointed them by Lot their ſeveral Places and Stations, whence

whence they ſhould ſtart with their Chariots: Then the Signal being given by the ſound of loud Trumpets, they ſtarted out briskly, all of them together, driving on their Horſes with their Noiſe and ſhaking the Reins with their Hands; the very Ground reſounded under the rolling of the Chariot Wheels and ſtamping of the Horſes, the Duſt flew up into the Air; all were immediately mingled together, none ſpar'd for ſpurring, but each one ſtrove to lock the Wheel of his next Neighbour, and overturn his Chariot, or to get the Head of him and his panting Horſes. So all their Horſes were almoſt out of Breath with Eagerneſs, and cover'd over with a white Foam, which fell from them upon the very Wheels. *Oreſtes* was come to the laſt of the Poſts that were ſet up as the Boundaries of the Race, and there ſhew'd his Dexterity in wheeling round it, giving the Reins looſe to his Right-hand Horſe and curbing his Left. Hitherto all the Chariots had run with almoſt an equal and ſtrait Speed; but the hard-mouth'd Horſes of the *Thracian* forc'd their way thro', and ruſhing as they turn'd ſhort, on the ſixth and ſeventh, fell foul with their Heads foremoſt among thoſe of the *Libyans* (which were of the City *Barce*;) then from this unlucky Accident it follow'd that one ruſh'd upon and tumbled over the other, and the whole Field (of *Criſſa*, a Town of *Phocis* where thoſe Games were kept) was ſpread with Pieces of broken and ſhatter'd Chariots; juſt as the Sea is cover'd after a Storm, with Shelves of a Shipwreck. The *Athenian*, a skilful Coachman, obſerving this drove aſide, and kept his Chariot out, avoiding the Fray, and leaving this confus'd Engagement of the Horſes in the middle. *Oreſtes* in the mean time was riding by the laſt Bound, and big with hopes of gaining his end. Then beholding the *Athenian* alone, and none other but him left to engage with, he laſh'd his ſwift Horſes, and making with full ſpeed after him, overtakes him; then both their Chariots drove even, ſometimes the Horſes of the

the one getting Head of the other by turns. Now unfortunate *Oreſtes* had got clear of all the Bounds, ſtanding ſtrait in his intire Chariot, when giving way with the Reins on his left for the Horſe to wheel round, he unawares ſtruck upon the very laſt Poſt; the Nave of the Wheel being ſplit, he tumbled and rolled down in the broken Harneſs. No ſooner fell he on the Ground, but the Horſes took to their Heels in the middle of the Field. The Multitude of Spectators, who had ſeen his Fall, bewail'd the young Man, who having given ſuch Tokens of his Valour and Ability, had met with ſuch an unhappy Miſchance. He was dragg'd along the Ground, ever and anon with his Heels upwards, till the reſt of the Racers ſtopping, with much ado, their Career, diſentangled him, all bloody as he was, ſo that none of his Friends could hardly have known again his mangled Body. Then laying him on a Funeral Pile they burnt his Corps, and put the miſerable Aſhes, the only Remains of that great Man, in a ſmall Braſs Urn, to be carry'd by ſome *Phocians*, appointed for that purpoſe, where he may find a Burying place in his own Country. This is the Truth of the whole Story; ſad indeed to relate, but to ſuch at have been with us Eye-witneſſes of it, the moſt diſmal Sight we ever beheld with our Eyes.

Cho. Alas! alas! now, I think, the whole Generation of the ancient Lords of this Country is intirely rooted up and ruined.

Clyt. Jove, what is the meaning of all this? Muſt I call this good or ill Luck? Shall I be a Gainer by it? If I am, yet it is a very ſad Caſe, to gain the Safety of my Life thro' my own Misfortunes.

Gov. Why, pray, do your Spirits fail you at this preſent Story?

Clyt. 'Tis a hard fate to get Children. A great Hardſhip for a Mother to be ill us'd by her Children, and yet be under a natural Neceſſity not to hate them.

Gov.

Gov. We then, as it ſeems, are come hither to no purpoſe.

Clyt. Not at all to no purpoſe. For how can you ſay to no purpoſe? Since you have brought ſuch convincing Tokens of the Death of one, who is born from my own Soul, then ſnatch'd from my Breaſt and Education and has liv'd ever ſince a Fugitive in a ſtrange Land, and never ſaw me ſince he went from his native Country; who laying to my Charge his Father's Death, threatned me hard with Revenge; ſo that ſweet Sleep clos'd my Eyes neither Night nor Day; the time preſent fill'd me with the Apprehenſion of future Danger; and every Day I ſpent reſembled Death more than Life. Now indeed I am rid of all Fears from her from that *Electra* as well as from him. She was my greateſt, my inmate Plague; the daily Vexation I had by her ſuck'd and ſpent my very Life's Blood; now henceforth I hope we ſhall enjoy ſome Reſt, and be free from her Threats.

Elect. O miſerable me! Nothing now remains for me to do, but to bemoan thy Misfortune, *Oreſtes*: Whoſe Miſeries have this farther Addition as after thy lamentable Death to be barbarouſly revil'd by a Mother. Is it well and right?

Clyt. Truly not with thee; but as it happen'd, 'tis well enough with him; it is but what he deſerv'd.

Elect. Hear, O *Nemeſis*, the Cry of my Brother lately dead.

Clyt. She has already heard what it behoved her to hear, and has paſſed and executed a juſt Sentence upon him.

Elect. Go, revile on; you are happy to the utmoſt of your Wiſhes.

Clyt. Will *Oreſtes* and you not ceaſe yet?

Elect. We are now ceaſed and deceaſed, but it is you that will not ceaſe. We muſt now forbear, we are forc'd to't; but it is out of our power to make you forbear us yet.

Clyt. Your coming, O Stranger, deſerves much Thanks from us, becauſe you have ſilenced this ſaucy Woman's prating Tongue.

Gov. Mayn't I be gone now, ſince every thing has happen'd ſo well, and according to your Deſires?

Clyt. By no means; for that would be agreeable neither to your Deſerts, nor to the Deſerts of him that ſent you hither; but go in along with us, and let her here without complain as loud as ſhe will, both of hers and her Friend's Misfortunes.

SCENE III.

Electra *to the* Chorus.

Elect. Does this wretched Woman appear to you in the leaſt ſorry or grieved? Is ſhe at all concern'd? Does ſhe ſhed a Tear for, or beſtow a ſingle Sigh on her Son, thus miſerably loſt? Yea rather ſhe laughs at, and triumphs in it; ſhe's gone rejoycing. O miſerable me! O my deareſt *Oreſtes*, how has thy Death deſtroy'd my Life! For thou art departed, thou haſt torn from my Heart thoſe Hopes which alone bore it up; thoſe vain Hopes that thou wouldſt live to come, ſome time or other, and revenge thy Father, and me thy afflicted Siſter. And now whither muſt I go? Forlorn as I am, and deſtitute of thee, as before of my Father. I am now doom'd to be again a Slave to the worſt of Creatures my deadlieſt Enemies, my Father's Murtherers. Is this the beſt Condition I am reduc'd to? But no, 'tis impoſſible for me to ſpend the Remainder of my Days under the ſame Roof with them. Thus then before this Door I throw my ſelf upon the Earth; thus deſerted and Friend-

Friendleſs I'll pine away my Life. Then, if any of my Enemies within is offended with this dejected Poſture, let him kill me. Death now will be a Kindneſs, I'll thank them for it. Life, while it laſts, can be nothing but Sorrow, and therefore no longer to be deſired by me.

The End of the Second Act.

The Second Intermediate Chorus, Electra.

Strophe *the Firſt.*] *Cho.* Where are now *Jove's* Thunderbolts? Where is the bright ſhining Sun? Can the Celeſtial Beings behold theſe things and ſit ſtill? Can they wink at this, and with-hold their Anger?

Elect. Woe! Woe is me!

Cho. Daughter, why theſe afflicting immodcrate Tears?

Elect. Alas!

Cho. Tear not your Heart with theſe deep Sighs and loud Cries.

Elect. Ye kill me.

Cho. How pray?

Elect. If ye propoſe to keep up my ſinking Spirits with any vain Hopes or Expectation from thoſe who are really departed into another World, this will be but to aggravate my deſperate Miſery, wherewith I am almoſt ſpent.

Antiſtrophe *the Firſt.*] *Cho.* I know that *Amphiaraus*, betray'd by his Wife for the ſake of the Bribe of a Golden Chain, was, tho' he had hid himſelf to avoid the Deſtiny he knew would befal him, forc'd to the *Theban* War, where the Earth open'd and ſwallow'd

him up; but notwithſtanding under Ground among the Deceaſed---

Elect. Oh me! Alas!

Cho.--- He lives, reigns, and, as a God, enjoys Divine Honours.

Elect. Alas!

Cho. Alas, indeed! Woe on *Eriphile* his curſed Wife!

Elect. And ſhe receiv'd her due Puniſhment.

Cho. So ſhe did wretched Woman!

Elect. I know it, I know it very well. *Alcmeon*, *Amphiaraus*'s Son, took care to revenge on his treacherous Mother his Father's mournful Death; but I have none to avenge me and my Father; For he who was to have done it, is gone and ſnatched away.

Strophe *the ſecond.*] *Cho.* O poor miſerable Creature how much Miſery do you endure!

Elect. I have indeed, I have much Experience, and a plentiful Share of Miſery, too much indeed for one, and to ſpare. None of the *Grecian* Nation ever underwent ſuch a heap of continued heavy and moſt deplorable Calamities.

Cho. We ſee it, and have a fellow-feeling of your Afflictions.

Elect. Oh bring me no farther Comfort, ſince there is no---

Cho. What ſay ye?

Elect.---More Hope of my own Noble Brother, ſince he's no longer able to come and relieve me.

Antiſtrophe *the ſecond.*] *Cho.* Death is the end appointed for all Mortals.

Elect. But not, as it happen'd to my miſerable Brother in thoſe Games and Horſe-Races, to be dragg'd with the torn Harneſs of a Chariot.

Cho.

Cho. No Man can foreſee, nor therefore fence againſt his Deſtiny. No more could he.

Elect. For how could this his Deſtiny be foreſeen, that he ſhould in a foreign Place, without any of the laſt uſual Offices paid him by my Hands----

Cho. Alas!

Elect. -----Fall, without any Funeral Obſequies and ſolemn Mourning, perform'd by us at his Grave.

ACT III. SCENE I.

Chryſothemis, Electra, *and* Chorus.

Chryſ. I Am ſurpriz'd with Joy, deareſt Siſter, which tranſports me: I have forgot to dreſs my ſelf, for the haſte I was in to come, and impart to you joyful News and free you from the Miſeries you have hitherto labour'd and groan'd under.

Elect. Where is it you could find any help and eaſe to my Calamities, which are paſt all Cure and Remedy?

Chryſ. Oreſtes is come to us; and you may be as ſure of what you hear now of me, as that you ſee me.

Elect. But, O miſerable Woman, are you grown Mad, that you thus ſport your ſelf in mine and your Misfortunes?

Chryſ. By our Houſhold Gods, I am in earneſt; I intend no Mockery or Sport; but I ſay plainly that he is come indeed.

Elect. Miſerable me! And who has told you ſo? Who has ſo ſoon impos'd on your Credulity?

Chryſ. I have it from no other but my ſelf, who have ſeen manifeſt and undeniable Tokens of the Truth of the Matter, and therefore I believe it.

Elect.

Elect. What credible Tokens have you ſeen, poor diſtracted Creature? What has happen'd to you, that you thus burn with the Fire, or hot Fit of a malignant incurable Fever? Why do you fire your ſelf with ſo groundleſs an Expectation?

Chryſ. Do but hear me, in the Gods Name; and when you know all, then paſs your Judgment; and call me either Wiſe or Fool, as I ſhall deſerve it.

Elect. Say on if it be any pleaſure to you to talk.

Chryſ. Then I'll declare to you every thing I have ſeen and know. When I came to my Father's venerable Tomb, I perceiv'd on the Top of it ſome freſh Streams of Milk, and the Place, under which he was laid, ſtrow'd round with all varieties of Flowers. I was amazed at the Sight, and looked about me, whether there was any Body near. When I view'd the whole Place, and found all Things quiet and ſafe, I ſoftly crept nearer the Sepulchre, and then I diſcovered on the Border of the Pile a Lock of Hair newly cut, as I gueſs'd and off the Head of ſome young Man. Strait, as I poor Woman was conſidering on theſe wonderful Sights, methought my Fancy was ſtruck with an Apparition of one whom my Heart had been very intimately acquainted with, and having recollected my Memory, and examined again the Token of the Hair, I concluded it could be no other but my *Oreſtes*, the deareſt of all Mankind; then I took the Hair in my Hands, (a Pledge, as I thought, of good Luck) and was of a ſudden ſo fill'd with Joy, that my Eyes could not forbear weeping: And I am very confident, as before, ſo now, that the Funeral Gifts could be brought or ſent hither by none but him. Whoſe Buſineſs beſides could it be to do this but yours or mine? This, I am ſure, was none of my doing, nor yours neither, ſince you are ſo confin'd, as not to be able, without great Danger, to ſtir from this Houſe to the Temples of the Gods. Nor yet can

this come from our Mother; whoſe Mind is not inclin'd to do any ſuch thing, nor, if ſhe had would ſhe have concealed it. Therefore theſe honorary Preſents can be of none but *Oreſtes*. Take a good Heart then, my Dear; Providence works variouſly, and does not always afflict us; we hitherto have felt Sorrow; who knows, but now, this Day will prove the Beginning and Foundation of much Happineſs to come?

Elect. Alas your Folly! How do I pity ye?

Chryſ. Why? Does what I ſay diſpleaſe you?

Elect. You know neither where you are, nor what you think or ſay.

Chryſ. What? don't I know what I have ſeen ſo plainly?

Elect. Alas, miſerable Woman! *Oreſtes* is dead. There remains for you no farther hope of any help from him. Let not your Eyes look that way any more.

Chryſ. O me then wretched, if it be truly ſo! But from whom did you hear it?

Elect. From the very Man, who was by him, when he died.

Chryſ. And where is he? For this ſeems to me very ſurprizing.

Elect. At home within; a very comfortable, and no unwelcome Meſſenger to our Mother.

Chryſ. Wretched me again! But what Man could that be, who ſhould bring thoſe Funeral Oblations to my Father's Tomb?

Elect. I for my Part rather fancy that ſome one of *Oreſtes*'s Friends has put thoſe things there, as Memorials and Tokens of his Death.

Chryſ. Unfortunate that I am! how unluckily miſtaken! how Joyfully haſten'd I hither with theſe News, little thinking how much greater Miſery than before we now are fall n into! For ſince I'm come here, I find not only our former Evils confirm'd, but freſh ones added to them.

Elect.

Elect. This is our Condition. But if you'll hearken to me, you may help to eaſe and free us from the Weight of our preſent Troubles.

Chryſ. What is't I muſt do? Raiſe the Dead?

Elect. I ne'er ſaid or meant any ſuch thing: I'm not ſo mad.

Chryſ. What is't then you would ingage me in? What muſt I take upon me to do?

Elect. I'll have you undertake, what I ſhall adviſe you.

Chryſ. If there's any likelihood of good in't, I'll not reject your Advice.

Elect. Conſider, that nothing can thrive without Pains.

Chryſ. I know't, and I'll bear, as far as I can, my ſhare in it.

Elect. Hear then, which way I propoſe to compaſs my End. You are ſenſible enough, that we are utterly deſtitute of Friends; Death has robb'd us of the only one was left; ſo that we two are all alone. While my Brother was alive and well, I had ſome Reaſon to hope he might revenge my Father's Death. But ſince he's no more; my Eyes are upon you, and I expect you ſhould without any delay, aſſiſt me your Siſter in killing this *Ægiſthus*, the Author and Executor of our Father's Death. For I ought no longer to hide my Deſign from you. For how long do you think to tarry and live in a Sluggiſh unactive State? With what Expectation can you yet keep your ſelf ſtrait under theſe Troubles? What is elſe left for you but to ſigh out your Life, bereft and thruſt out of your Father's Poſſeſſions, in a mournful Condition, doom'd to grow Old, and end the tedious Remainder of your Days alone, without an Husband to comfort you. For there's no room for you to think of Marrying; you'll ne'er obtain that Wiſh; *Egiſthus* is not ſo Shallow-brain'd, as to permit either you or me to have any

Off-ſpring, which may in time grow up to be his inevitable Ruin. And therefore if you approve of and reſolve to come into my Meaſures, firſt you'll gain the Reputation and Name of a pious Child, from this good turn you may perform toward our dead Relations, Father and Brother; then as you was born free, you'll hereafter ſtill keep and aſſert that Title, and get an Husband worthy of your ſelf. There's none but will be ready enough to fix his Eyes, and ſettle his Love on one, who has ſhew'd ſo much Goodneſs and Honeſty. Don't you ſee how much Fame you'll purchaſe to your ſelf and me, if you comply with my Counſel? Who of our Country-People or Strangers will ſee us, without beſtowing on us ſuch Commendations as theſe. Behold, good People, th ſe are the virtuous Siſters, who were the Deliverers of their Family, who ventured their Lives to bring to condign Death the Enemies of it, notwithſtanding that their Villany had met with ſo much Succeſs. Are not they to be beloved, and reſpected by all? Ought not they to have publick Honours decreed them for their Valour, in all Feſtivals and ſolemn Aſſemblies? Such Encomiums will every one raiſe on us, that Living, or Dying, our good Name ſhall never fail. Wherefore, dear Siſter, be adviſed by me, and labour with me in our Father's Quarrel, join your Endeavours with mine to vindicate our Brother's Memory, put an End to my Miſeries, put an End to yours; and remember, that to thoſe who are well born, no greater Infamy can happen than to live a baſe infamous Life.

Chor. In ſuch Affairs Prudence is the moſt uſeful and ſerviceable thing, both for him that adviſeth and him that is adviſed.

Chryſ. And truly, Country-women, if ſhe had her right Wits, ſhe would, before ſhe ſpoke, have been more Circumſpect, than ſhe ſeems to be. For what Reaſon do you ſee, raſh Creature, to arm your ſelf

with

with ſo much Boldneſs, and invite me to bear you out in it? What ſee you in your ſelf? You are born a Woman, and not a Man; and your Strength is by much inferior to that of the Enemies. Their Fortune favours them daily more and more; ours forſakes us, and is dwindled into nothing. Who can compaſs the Death of ſuch a Man as *Ægiſthus*, without ruining himſelf in the Attempt? Take heed, leſt we, who are miſerable enough, if our Deſigns ſhould be diſcover'd, run our ſelves into much greater Evils. It will neither free nor avail us any way, to take this final Reſolution, to aim at this Vain-Glory, and at length to die an inglorious miſerable Death. Beſides, to die is not the worſt may befal one, but this, if, when he deſires to die, and thereby avoid preſent Torments, he then be not able to obtain it. Wherefore I beſeech you, before we and our whole Race are entirely ruin'd, bridle your angry Paſſion; and whate'er you've ſpoken, I'll keep cloſe, as if nothing had been ſpoken and deſign'd. As for your ſelf, have your Wits more about you, and ſince your Strength is nothing, learn, at leaſt for a time, to give place to thoſe who are more Powerful.

Chor. Yield to her, *Electra*, nothing is more profitable than Prudence and Wiſdom.

Elect. What you ſaid, *Chryſothemis*, was no more than I expected. I knew very well you would reject my Propoſition. Then this glorious Work is left to be atchiev'd by me with my own Hands alone; for I am reſolv'd my Reſolution ſhall not be in vain.

Chryſ. Alas! Would this had been your Mind, when my Father died; for then you had done all at once!

Elect. Such then was my Nature, only the Strength of my Mind was leſſer, and weaker.

Chryſ. Then ever keep that ſame Mind.

Elect. You abound with your Advice, and are very ſparing of your Aſſiſtance.

Chryſ.

Chryſ. 'Tis fit that Raſhneſs ſhould ſuffer.

Elect. I may commend your Caution, but I hate your Cowardice

Chryſ. I hear and will bear with you; and when you give me better Language——

Elect. But no other are you like to have of me.

Chryſ. There will be hereafter time enough to give a right Judgment of theſe things.

Elect. Be gone; there's no good to be got by you.

Chryſ. There might be, would you but learn.

Elect. Go, and tell all this to your Mother.

Chryſ. I bear not ſo bitter a Hatred towards you.

Elect. Yet ſee how diſhonourably you uſe me, to what degree of Infamy you'd bring me.

Chryſ. Not at all diſhonourably, and to no Infamy; but to more Prudence.

Elect. Then muſt I follow you, and model my ſelf according to your Meaſures, and Opinion of right and wrong.

Chryſ. When you are more ſober, then you may be our Guide.

Elect. What a hard thing it is, for one to ſeem to ſpeak ſo fair, and yet be ſtill in the wrong!

Chryſ. This is very well ſpoken of your ſelf.

Elect. Why? Seem I not to you to ſpeak right?

Chryſ. But there are ſome Caſes, where Right may bring us to ſuffer Wrong.

Elect. Such Caſes and Laws ſhan't be the Rule of my Life.

Chryſ. If you'll do what I adviſe, you'll commend me hereafter; but if you purſue your own Deſigns, you'll own too late that my Advice was ſafer.

Elect. And I'll purſue them, without being frighted with your Threats.

Chryſ. Is this truly your laſt Reſolution? And will you not take Counſel again once more?

Elect. Nothing is more dangerous than ill Counſel.

Chryſ

Chryſ. You ſeam to reliſh nothing of what I ſay to you.

Elect. 'Tis not lately, but long ago, that I have taken up and fix'd this my Opinion and Reſolution.

Chryſ. 'Tis then time now for me to be gone, ſince you can't like my Advice, nor I your Ways.

Elect. Then get you in for I ſhan't ever concern my ſelf or conſult with you any more tho' you'd never ſo fain. 'Twould be a great Folly in me to hunt after, and purſue vain Purpoſes.

Chryſ. Purſue your own Wiſdom, of which you fancy your ſelf to have ſuch a Stock. When once you are plung'd over Head and Ears in Miſery, you'll then remember, commend and acknowledge the Truth of my Words.

The End of the Third Act.

The Third Intermediate Chorus.

Strophe *the Firſt.* Why behold we thoſe very wiſe Birds above, taking care of their Parents who have begot and bred them up, and why don't we do the ſame? But it ſhall not be ſo. By *Jupiter*'s Lightning and by *Themis* the Goddeſs of Juſtice, who dwells in Heaven, they ſhall not live long unpuniſhed. Thou Fame the Meſſenger of the Inhabitants of the lower World ſound this lamentable News into the Ears of *Agamemnon* and *Oreſtes*, the Son and Grandſon of *Atreus*, carry them the account of theſe ſhameful uncomfortable Deeds.

Antiſtrophe the *Firſt.* Tell them the Plague has ſeiz'd their Family; their Children are divided by Quarrels, and are not able to live peaceably together. Poor betray'd *Electra* alone and given over, is toſs'd up and down with Miſery, lamenting continually the Fate of her Father, like a mournful Nightingale; nor is ſhe concern'd at all whether ſhe dies or no; but rather

ther prepar'd to lose the benefit of beholding the Light, on condition she might take her Revenge on these two Furies, *Ægisthus* and *Clytemnestra*. What Person nobly descended would bear to live in such a Condition?

Strophe *the Second.* O Daughter, Daughter, none, who is generous and yet lives oppress'd with Calamities, would cast a shameful Blot on his Dignity, and forfeit his good Name. You have hitherto led your whole Age in continual Sorrow, and by arming your self to fight against base Villany, gain'd with this one Action two glorious Titles, of being the Wisest and Valiantest of all your Sex.

Antistrophe *the Second.* May you then survive, and in Power and Wealth get above your Enemies, as much as you are now below them! Since we have observ'd you, notwithstanding the difficulties of your ill Fortune, carrying your self best of all, with the greatest Equity towards Men, and Piety towards Heaven.

ACT

ACT IV. SCENE I.

Oreſtes, Chorus, *and* Electra. Pylades *Mute.*

Oreſt. PRAY, good Women, inform us whether we have been rightly directed, and whether we are arriv'd to the right Place where our Buſineſs calls us?

Cho. What is it you enquire after? And what wou'd you have by your coming?

Oreſt. I've been ſome while enquiring, where *Ægiſthus* dwells.

Cho. This is his Palace; you are come very right, and whoever directed you is not to be blamed.

Oreſt. Which then of you all will give Notice within of our coming, which brings them all in common deſirable News.

Cho. She will do't, for it is more proper for one who belongs, and is a-kin to their Family, to carry the Meſſage.

Oreſt. Go then, Woman; tell them that ſome Men from *Phocis* want to ſpeak with *Ægiſthus*.

Elect. Woe to me miſerable! Are ye they who bring a clear Confirmation of the Report we heard lately?

Oreſt. I know nothing of your Report; but old *Strophius* has given me a Charge to deliver a Meſſage concerning *Oreſtes*.

Elect.

Elect. What is't, Stranger! Oh what a Dread comes upon me!

Oreſt. We bring hither the ſmall Remains of dead *Oreſtes*, which as you ſee, we carry in this little Urn.

Elect. Oh miſery! Now I ſee clearly and at hand (as it ſeems) the very weight of that Calamity where-with I m oppreſſed.

Oreſt. If the Tears you ſhed are upon the account of poor *Oreſtes*'s Evils, know that what remains of his Body is incloſ'd within this Urn.

Elect. O Stranger, for Heaven-ſake, if this Urn contains what's left of my *Oreſtes*, give it me; let me take it in my Hands, that I may mingle my Tears with that dear Duſt, and lament the utter overthrow of my ſelf and our whole Kindred.

Oreſt. Bring it here, and give it her, whoſoever ſhe be; for by her Requeſt ſhe appears not to be his Enemy, but ſome one of his Friends or near Relations.

Electra taking the Urn.] O Monument of one who to me was the deareſt of all Men! O Remains of *Oreſtes*'s Soul! How fall'n are my Hopes, now I receive you, dear *Oreſtes*, from what they were, when I ſent you away: I bear you now in my Hands when you are reduc'd to nothing, but I ſent you from this Houſe a lovely hopeful Child. Would you had died before theſe Hands ſtole and ſaved you from Deſtruction, and deliver'd you to be carried into a Foreign Nation! Then might your dead Body have lain in the ſame Sepulchre with your Father. But you was miſerably thrown away in a ſtrange Land a Fugitive, far from your own Houſe and the reach of your Siſter. I have not, Unfortunate as I am! waſhed your Corps with my kind Hands, nor dreſs'd it in the uſual Ornaments, nor carried, according to Cuſtom, and as it behoved me, that miſerable Burthen of your Body to its Funeral Pile. But, poor Wretch, your Obſequies have been perform'd by Strangers; and what of you is now re-

return'd to me, is but a ſmall weight of Duſt in this little Veſſel. Miſerable Woman that I was! How unprofitable has been my former care of your Education! To what purpoſe is it that I have ſo often taken ſo much Pains (and thoſe Pains were ſweet) about your Preſervation. Your own Mother could not have been more tender of you than I was; none of all the Family look'd after you and fed you but my ſelf. you and I ſlept in the ſame Bed. Now in one Day all the Ends I propos'd in ſo doing are loſt, all is Dead with you. You are departed, and, like a ſwift Whirlwind, carried every thing with you. My Father is gone, I'm alſo dead with you; you are dead, vaniſh'd, and paſt recalling. My Enemies laugh at my Misfortunes; my Mother is run mad for Joy. Mother? No Mother. She's too ſavage for that Name. She concerning whom you ſent me many a private Meſſage that you'd at length appear in our Revenge and Deliverance. But yours and my ill Genius, has taken you off; and ſent me back, inſtead of your moſt lovely Form, theſe Aſhes, this empty and unprofitable Shadow. Alas! Alas! Miſerable Body! Woe! Woe! O me, O me! O my deareſt, how diſmal was that Journey, when you by me was ſent into *Phocis*, and this, when you return thence dead! How have you ruin'd, undone me, my dear Brother! Then receive me now to your ſelf, let this Urn hold us both; I'm become nothing now, let my nothing be join'd with yours; let me henceforth live with you among the Shades below. When you was yet alive, we ſhar'd Fortunes alike; and 'tis my wiſh now to die, 'twould be Satisfaction to lie in the ſame Grave; for I ſee the Dead are no longer ſenſible of their former Miſeries.

Cho. Remember, *Electra*, your Father who begot you was Mortal, and ſo was *Oreſtes*; therefore ſet Bounds to your exceſſive Sorrow, ſince all of us muſt ſuffer Death, and 'tis a Debt we are all bound to pay.

Oreſt.

Oreſt. Alas, alas! what ſhall I ſay now? I'm puzzled now to ſpeak. I'm no longer able to command my Tongue and Temper.

Elect. What is it thus troubleth you? What is the meaning of this Concern and Struggle in your Speech?

Oreſt. Is this thy Countenance, that ſame renown'd beautiful Mien of *Electra*?

Cho. It is the very ſame, this is the moſt unfortunate *Electra*.

Oreſt. Alas! Your woful Miſhap.

Elect. How come you, Stranger, thus to pity and bemoan me?

Oreſt. O Body ſhamefully deform'd through Sufferings, and hardly fit to be ſeen!

Elect. Theſe are hard Words, Stranger; but indeed I am no better than as you in Compaſſion repreſent me.

Oreſt. Alas! Was you bred up for this? Is your ſo-fam'd Beauty come to this, to live an uncomfortable unmarry'd Life, to eſpouſe no other but a miſerable Fate?

Elect. Stranger, why ſtand you thus ſighing and fixing your Eyes on me?

Oreſt. How little have I yet underſtood of my own Afflictions?

Elect. By what of all that has been ſaid, come you to underſtand more of them?

Oreſt. By ſeeing you ſo famous now for ſo many Misfortunes.

Elect. And yet you can ſee but a few of them.

Oreſt. And how is it poſſible to behold worſe and greater?

Elect. It is; for I live here with Murtherers.

Oreſt. What Murtherers? Of whom? What Evil mean you by this?

Elect. The Murtherers of my Father, and I'm forced to be a Slave to them.

Oreſt.

Oreſt. What Mortal impoſeth this Hardſhip and Neceſſity upon you?

Elect. One who is call'd my Mother, but does nothing that can deſerve that Name.

Oreſt. How does ſhe force you? Does ſhe beat or ſtarve you?

Elect. By beating, ſtarving, and many other cruel Treatments.

Oreſt. And is there none to aſſiſt you, and hinder her?

Elect. None. There was but one remaining from whom I might expect theſe good Offices; and inſtead of him you have brought me here his Aſhes.

Oreſt. O hard Fate! How have I pity'd you ever ſince I beheld you!

Elect. Then know you are the only one who beſtows Pity on my Miſeries.

Oreſt. And I am the only one who come to bear you Company in your Sorrows.

Elect. Whence come you, who, if you are not, act ſo well and kindly the part of a Relation?

Oreſt. I'd tell you, if I were ſure there were none here but Friends and Well-wiſhers.

Elect. You may ſpeak ſafely; there are none here but who wiſh us well and whom you may truſt.

Oreſt. Now then lay down this Urn, and you'll know all.

Elect. By no means, Friend; by the Gods you'll ne'er perſuade me to part with it.

Oreſt. Hearken to me, I ſay; and you'll not do amiſs.

Elect. No, by that Beard of yours; don't go about to take from me what in this World I hold deareſt.

Oreſt. I ſay I will not ſuffer it.

Elect. I muſt, *Oreſtes*, indeed be very miſerable, if I ſuffer my ſelf to be robb'd of your Remains buried in this Urn.

Oreſt.

Oreſt. Speak better, and let your Words carry a good Omen with them. Your Grief is quite wrong and miſapply'd.

Elect. How? Is my Grief wrong and miſapply'd, which I take up for a dead Brother?

Oreſt. Theſe Speeches are out of Seaſon, and don't at all become you.

Elect. Is it diſhonourable for me to name and value the Memory of my dead Brother? Or am I unworthy of him?

Oreſt. You are not unworthy; but theſe Lamentations are none of your preſent Buſineſs.

Elect. Why not, while I carry here what remains of *Oreſtes*'s Body?

Oreſt. But there's nothing here of *Oreſtes*'s Body; 'tis only a Counterfeit, a Fiction.

Elect. Where then are that miſerable Man's Remains laid up? Where are they buried?

Oreſt. No where, for the Living needs no Tomb.

Elect. How ſay you, Man?

Oreſt. 'Tis no Falſhood I ſpeak.

Elect. Is then that good Man, my *Oreſtes*, alive?

Oreſt. If I am alive.

Elect. And are you he?

Oreſt. Look on this my Father's Seal: Let it vouch the Truth of what I ſay.

Elect. O moſt bleſſed and beloved Day!

Oreſt. Moſt happy indeed; I bear you witneſs.

Elect. O the ſight of my Brother! O the ſound of his Voice! Are you come?

Oreſt. Inquire for him no where elſe, for here he is.

Elect. Is it you then I hold now in my Arms?

Oreſt. And may you ever henceforth thus hold him!

Elect. O deareſt Friends, O Fellow Citizens and Country-Women, come here, and behold my *Oreſtes*, him.

him who was thus artificially Dead, and now ſo artificially preſerv'd and rais'd to Life again.

Chor. We all ſee him, Daughter; and our Eyes ſhed Tears for Joy at ſuch ſurprizing Events.

Interciſions. Strophe *the firſt.*] *Elect.* O you Offſpring of a Man moſt dear to me, you are come at laſt: You have found me out, you are come, you ſee her now, whom you ſo much long'd after.

Syſtem *the firſt.*] *Oreſt.* I am come; but be ſtill and have patience awhile.

Elect. Why?

Oreſt. Silence is beſt, leſt we be overheard within.

Strophe *the ſecond.*] *Elect.* But by *Diana* ever untam'd and unmarry'd *Diana*, I'll ne'er think fit to ſtand in fear of that Herd of Women that are within, that idle unprofitable Lumber, that inſignificant weight on the Earth.

Syſtem *the ſecond*] *Oreſt.* Take care however. Women have ſometimes a Martial Warlike Soul. Think on *Clytemneſtra*.

Strophe *the third.*] *Elect.* Ay me, alas! You have indeed produc'd a clear Inſtance of ſuch Sufferings, as ours have been, endleſs and never to be forgotten.

Syſtem *the third.*] *Oreſt.* I know all that; but there is no need of mentioning it till a fit Opportunity preſents it ſelf.

Antiſtrophe *the firſt*] *Elect.* All Time, every Opportunity is fit for ſpeaking what I have ſo much right to ſpeak. I have ſcarce had the Freedom of my Tongue till now, and if before I was not altogether ſilent, much more now can I forbear uſing my Liberty.

Antiſyſtem *the Firſt*] *Oreſt.* I agree with you; therefore hold faſt, and loſe not that Liberty.

Elect. How ſhall I do?

Oreſt. This is not a time to uſe long Diſcourſes.

Anti-

Antiſtrophe *the Second.*] *Elect.* Who, upon this your coming, can with any colour of Reaſon enjoin me Silence, when my Eyes enjoy ſo unaccountable and unexpected a Bleſſing as the ſeeing of you?

Antiſyſtem *the Second.*] *Oreſt.* Then you ſaw me, when Providence thought it convenient to bring me forth.

Antiſtrophe *the Third.*] *Elect.* Ay! ay! What you ſay now, that Providence has led you to this Houſe, fills me with more Joy than ever, and moſt deſerves my Thanks. I take indeed your coming to be divine and miraculous.

Antiſyſtem *the Third.*] *Oreſt.* I'm loth indeed to check you in your juſt rejoicing, and acknowledging this Divine Favour; but I m afraid leſt you be overcome with too much Joy.

Monoſtrophicks.] *Elect.* O you, who after ſo many Years abſence have vouchſafed to return and ſhew your ſelf to me, you who have ſeen me here ſo much afflicted, don't ——

Oreſt. What muſt I not do?

Elect. —— Don't deprive me of your dear ſelf, don't perſuade me to abate any thing of that Joy and Satisfaction I take in beholding you.

Oreſt. Truly not I, for I'd be angry if I ſaw any one elſe do it.

Elect. Do you then approve and applaud my Joy?

Oreſt. Why not?

Elect. to the Chorus. O dear Friends, the News I heard before of my *Oreſtes's* Death were as much unexpected as theſe of his Return. My Anger and Paſſion was too great to vent it ſelf in Words; and if I could have vented it, I durſt not do't for fear. But now I have and embrace you, my *Oreſtes*; you have appeared to me, and ſhew'd me that dear Face, which I can never forget, which could comfort me in my greateſt Troubles.

Oreſt.

Oreſt. Forbear all ſuperfluous Talk now. You need not tell me at preſent of your Mother's wicked Deeds, nor how *Ægiſthus* ſquanders our Eſtate, and exhauſts our Father's Treaſure with his vain Extravagancies. Such Diſcourſes would ſpend too much of this precious Time that is to be otherwiſe employ'd. Conſider of what is more proper to our preſent purpoſe, where and which way we may openly or privily ſet upon our Enemies now, and ſurprize them in the middle of their Mirth. Then I would not have you when we go into the Houſe appear before your Mother with a cheerful Countenance; but rather behave your ſelf mournfully, fetch a Sigh ever and anon, as if it was for the ſad Meſſage which was deliver'd of my Fall: And when we have brought our Deſigns to a happy Concluſion, then will be our time, in our turns to laugh and rejoice with full Freedom.

Elect. What pleaſes you, Brother pleaſes me; what ſeems beſt to you muſt alſo ſeem ſo to me, who owe all my Joys to you nor would I cauſe you the leaſt Diſpleaſure, not if I were ſure to be ne'er ſo great a Gainer by't. Elſe I ſhould not comply with, nor make the beſt uſe of my Fortune. But you're appriſed of every thing has been tranſacted here. How indeed ſhould not you? For you've (no doubt) heard how that *Ægiſthus* is abroad, my Mother at home; and you need be under no apprehenſion of her ſeeing me cheerful, for there hath been of a long time an inveterate Hatred between us. But ever ſince I have ſeen you again, I have been ſo poſſeſſed with Joy, that I ſhall ne'er forbear expreſſing it, even by my Tears. For how is't poſſible for me to forbear, who have beheld you at one and the ſame time both dead and alive? Let then my Joy and Tears mix together; Tears for your Death, Joy for your Life. You've wrought for me ſuch unexpected good things, you've made me ſo familiar with wonderful incredible Bleſſings, that if my

my Father was to return to Life again I ſhould no longer account it a Miracle but believe my Eyes without any difficulty. Since then you have contriv'd this way, lead us on, as you think fit. As to my ſelf if I had been left alone, I was reſolv'd not to fail of one of theſe two things, either to have freed my ſelf, or to have died in the Attempt, glorioufly.

Chor. I adviſe you to beware and be ſilent: For I hear ſome of the People within going forth.

Elect. Go in ye Strangers; for ye bring with you News, and that which none within will ſhut out of Doors, and yet none of them will be long well-pleaſed to have received.

SCENE II.

The Governor, Oreſtes *and* Electra. Pylades *Mute.*

Gov. Ye Fools and Mad, have ye no regard to your Life? Have ye no Senſe or natural Reaſon, to apprehend that ye are not near the greateſt Danger, but in the very Jaws of it? For if I had not long watch'd at theſe Doors your Deſigns had much ſooner reached their Ears, than your Preſence their Sight; but I uſed my Induſtry and Skill to ſcreen you from Ruin. Now therefore break off your long Speeches and your boundleſs clamorous Mirth, and go in. Delays are dangerous, this is the very time for Diſpatch.

Oreſt. How will it go with me, if I go in?

Gov. Very well, for none there knows you.

Oreſt. Then you've told them I was dead?

Gov. You are with them like one departed to the Manſions of Hell.

Oreſt.

Oreſt. Are they glad on't? What ſay they?

Gov. When our Buſineſs is finiſhed, I'll come to Particulars. But as things ſtand now, in their Opinion all goes well with them, though in truth 'tis quite otherwiſe.

Elect. For Gods ſake, Brother, tell me what Man this is.

Oreſt. Don't you remember him?

Elect. I can't call to mind; I know nothing of him.

Oreſt. Know you not, into whoſe Hands you once deliver'd me?

Elect. Whom? What is't you ſay or mean?

Oreſt. By whoſe Hands I was through your wiſe Management convey'd into *Phocis*?

Elect. What, is this he, whom, when my Father was ſlain, I found to be the only one of many fit to be truſted?

Oreſt. The ſame. But don't detain me with more Queſtions.

Elect. O joyful Day! O ſole Preſerver of *Agamemnon*'s Family! How came you hither? Are not you the Man, who deliver'd this my Brother and me from many heavy Troubles? O beloved Hands! O that ſweet Meſſage your Feet have brought! O the good Service they have done! How could you be here with us, and ſcape my Knowledge, and not diſcover your ſelf? How could you mortifie me with your cruel Speeches at firſt, when you in truth had ſo ſweet and comfortable a Meſſage to acquaint me with? Hail Father! (for methinks I ſee in your Face my very Father) hail! I aſſure you, you are of all Men the Perſon I both hated and loved moſt in one and the ſame Day.

Gov. Enough of all this now, *Electra*; we ſhall hereafter have many both Days and Nights to talk over theſe things, and divert you with the Relation,

and ſeveral Paſſages of the whole Story. But I warn you both that ſtand here, *Oreſtes* and *Pylades*, that now is your time to act. *Clytemneſtra* now is within all alone, and no Man with her. If ye put it off any longer, conſider that you'll be like then to encounter not only with a greater Number, but with others ſuperior in Cunning.

Oreſt. Then *Pylades*, 'tis not our buſineſs to trifle away our precious Time with much talking; but rather to go in with all ſpeed, paying firſt our Adorations to our Country Gods, who preſide over this Houſe, and keep their Station here at the Entry.

Elect. King *Apollo*, be propitious and favourable to their Prayers; and to me alſo, who have often with a bountiful Hand given you Oblations of ſuch things as I had; and now, *Lycius Apollo*, I preſent you what I can my Prayers and Supplications on my bended Knees; help us with your kind Influence, and proſper our Counſels and Deſigns; and let Men know, what Puniſhments Heaven reſerves for Wickedneſs and Impiety.

The End of the Fourth Act.

The Fourth Intermediate Chorus.

Strophe.] See how *Mars*, breathing Blood and Slaughter, goes on deſtroying all before him! Now *Oreſtes* and *Pylades* have o'ertaken their Enemies; now the inevitable Furies, which are ever the Attendants of wicked Actions, are enter'd into the Houſe; and it will not be long, before that comes to paſs, which my Prophetick Mind in Dreams foreſaw.

Anti-

Antistrophe.] *Orestes*, the Helper and Avenger of the Dead, has secretly convey'd himself into this House, the ancient rich Palace of his Father, where he brandishes with his Hands his sharp Sword, in order to bath it in the Blood of his Enemies. *Mercury* the Son of *Maia* led him privately, concealing this dark unknown Design, and carrying it to its end and time of Execution, which is no longer to be put off.

ACT V. SCENE I.

Electra *and* Chorus.

Elect. DEAR Countrywomen, this very Moment the Men are about to finish the Work. But stand ye still, and wait the Event.

Chor. How? What is a doing?

Elect. As for *Clytemnestra*, she's preparing the Vessels and other things for *Orestes*'s Funeral, whom she fancies dead; while *Orestes* and *Pylades* stand by her.

Cho. And why are you come out?

Elect. To watch that *Ægisthus* come not upon us unawares.

Clytemnestra *crying out within, while they murther her.*] O me! Alas! Help, help! Have I no Friends in this House? Are none here but Cut-throats?

Elect. Somebody cries out within; don't ye hear?

Interciſions. Strophe *the First.*] *Chorus.* Alas! I heard a dismal Cry; it seizes me with Horror.

System *the First.*] Clytemnestra *within.* O me miserable! Help, *Ægisthus*, where are you?

Elect. Hearken, somebody cries again.

Clyt within.] O Son, Son, take pity o'your Mother.

Elect. Is't you then, who calls for Pity? Little enough you shew'd both him and his Father.

Strophe

Strophe *the Second.*] *Cho.* O City, O miſerable Race! This Day's Fate brings on thee utter Deſtruction.

Syſtem *the Second.*] *Clyt. within.* O me! I'm wounded.

Elect. Bravely done; again, if you can, follow your Blow.

Clyt. within. Woe is me! Struck again.

Elect. Would *Ægiſthus* was ſo too.

Strophe *the Third.*] *Cho.* The Wiſhes and Prayers of the Dead are now fulfilling; they ſeem to live again once more; and *Agamemnon* is refreſh'd with this Revenge, and from under ground below witneſſes his Satisfaction: For now they, who heretofore were murther'd, may have their Blood plentifully expiated with that of their Murtherers.

SCENE II.

Electra, Oreſtes, *and* Chorus. Pylades *Mute.*

Syſteme *the Third.*] *Elect.* And here they are come themſelves; their Hands are all dropping with Blood, and imbru'd in the Sacrifice they have made to *Mars*. Brother *Oreſtes*, tell me how goes our Buſineſs?

Oreſt. Every thing will be well within, if *Apollo* ſpoke true. That wretched Woman is dead; and you now need no longer fear to be ill uſed by the haughty Imperiouſneſs of your Mother.

Antiſtrophe *the Firſt.*] *Cho.* Ceaſe ye, for I ſpy *Ægiſthus* coming; he's within ſight.

Antiſyſteme *the Firſt.*] *Elect.* Friends, is not it beſt for you to go back into the Houſe? For behold, the Man is even upon you. He returns from ſome Place out of Town full of Joy.

Antiſtrophe *the Second.*] *Cho.* Go in, as ſoon as ye can, within the Entry. Ye have laid hitherto your Schemes right; go on now as ſucceſsfully as before.

Antiſyſteme *the Second.*] *Oreſt.* Aſſure your ſelf, we'll finiſh our Work, as you deſire.

Elect. But make haſte.

Oreſt. I'm gone.

Elect. My Care ſhall be of doing what's to be done here.

Antiſtrophe *the Third.*] *Cho.* It ſeems to me fit you talk a little firſt ſoftly and fairly to this Man, that he mayn't ſuſpect any thing, but fall unaware into this ſecret Snare, and run of himſelf upon his own Puniſhment.

SCENE III.

Ægiſthus, Electra. Chorus *Mute.*

Antiſyſteme *the Third.*] *Ægiſth.* Which of you knows where are thoſe Strangers from *Phocis*, whom they report to have brought us the News how *Oreſtes* loſt his Life in a Horſe-Race? I judge *Electra*, you know; you who heretofore have ſhewed your ſelf ſo very impudent; for I don't doubt but you've made it your buſineſs to inform your ſelf, and therefore are beſt able from your own Knowledge to inform me alſo.

Elect. Yes indeed, I know it; for how could I have forbore acquainting my ſelf with the Misfortune of the deareſt of all my Relations.

Ægiſth. Tell me then, where are thoſe Strangers?

Elect. Within; where they have met with a friendly Entertainer and Entertainment.

Ægiſth.

Ægiſth. But have they really affirmed the Death of *Oreſtes*?

Elect. They have not only affirmed it in Words, but have beſides proved their Meſſage by an Ocular Demonſtration.

Ægiſth. Mayn't we then now clearly ſatisfie our own Eyes?

Elect. You may; and the Sight indeed is very diſmal, ſuch as none would covet to ſee.

Ægiſth. You have done, what was never your Inclination and ſeldom your Cuſtom to do; brought me a very joyful Meſſage.

Elect. If this be ſo very acceptable to you, I wiſh you much joy with it.

Ægiſth. Here then I command Silence. Let the Doors be wide open'd for all the *Mycenians* and *Argives* to behold this Sight. If any of them all has heretofore been lifted up with vain and empty Hopes, let him now ſee this Man's dead Body, and ever hereafter ſtop his boaſting Mouth, nor ſwell himſelf againſt my Power, unleſs he has a mind to bring Chaſtiſement and Vengeance upon his Head.

Elect. [*Opening the Door wide.*] Thus let it be done, I obey. Time has taught me to be wiſe, and comport my ſelf ſubmiſſively to my Superiors.

SCENE IV.

Ægiſthus, Oreſtes *and* Electra. Pylades, Chorus *Mutes.* Clytemneſtra's *Body cover'd.*

Ægiſth. O *Jove*, I ſee a Sight, dead *Oreſtes*'s Body; that *Oreſtes* which was always the Object of my Envy and Hatred! If there be any ſuch Goddeſs as *Ne-*

meſis

meſis or Juſtice, I ſay nothing. I'm not guilty of this. But take off that Covering from the Body, let it be ſeen; and I my ſelf will drop ſome Tears upon my Kinſman's Corps.

Oreſt. Take it off and carry't away your ſelf; it is none of my Buſineſs but yours, to view it and apply to't as friendly as you pleaſe.

Ægiſth. 'Tis well adviſed, and I'll do't; but go you [*to one of the Attendants*] firſt, and call *Clytemneſtra*, if ſhe be within.

Oreſt. [*Pointing to the Body uncover'd.*] There ſhe is, next to thee; thou needſt look no where elſe.

Ægiſth. O me! What is this? What do I ſee!

Oreſt. Whom art thou afraid of? Doſt not thou know her?

Ægiſth. What Mens Hands, what Snares am I fall'n into?

Oreſt. Couldſt not thou before find out, that thou, alive as thou wert, heldſt a Diſcourſe with the dead?

Ægiſth. Alas! I underſtand the Meaning of it. I'm convinced now it can be none other but *Oreſtes*, who talks to me.

Oreſt. Couldſt thou, who haſt the Reputation of ſo great a Conjurer, lie ſo long under a Miſtake?

Ægiſth. Then am I wretched, and undone. Yet give me leave to ſpeak a Word for my ſelf.

Elect. For Heav'n-ſake, Brother, let him ſpeak no longer. Why ſhould he lengthen out his time with more Speeches? What could ſuch a Man gain by time, who is catch'd and intangled in his Wickedneſs, and has no future Hopes but of Death? Away with him quick, kill him out-right, and when he's kill'd, let him be deliver'd to ſuch Funeral as 'tis fit for a Murtherer to have; let his vile Carkaſs be thrown to the Dogs and Crows, to be devour'd and pick'd: Let it be caſt out far from our ſight. May this be the ſole remedy and end of the Miſeries I have ſo long groaned under.

Oreſt.

Oreſt. to Ægiſthus. Get thee in quickly. No more Words and arguing. The Buſineſs in hand is thy Life.

Ægiſth. Why doſt thou drive me in? If this be a good Deed, muſt it be done in the dark? Why doſt not thou diſpatch me quickly?

Oreſt. Hold thy Peace, and forbear thy Direction. Get thee into the Place, where thou murtheredſt my Father; for there I deſign thou ſhouldſt die.

Ægiſth. It is then decreed that that Place ſhall ſee the preſent and future Misfortunes of *Pelops*'s Family.

Oreſt. And thy own too; what I now foretel thee, is thy laſt Fate.

Ægiſth. But thou didſt not learn of thy Father this foretelling Trade, that thou ſo prideſt thy ſelf upon.

Oreſt. Thou prateſt too much; it ſtops our Way and ſpends Time. Go on.

Ægiſth. Go thou firſt.

Oreſt. I'll have thee go before me.

Ægiſth. Art thou afraid I'd run away.

Oreſt. No. But I would thwart thee, and abridge thee of thy Will; I'll take care thy Death ſhall have no allay of any the leaſt thing that can be to thee ſweet and pleaſant. All the Circumſtances of it ſhall be bitter.

The EPILOGUE.

THUS ought every Tranſgreſſor of the Laws to be immediately puniſhed; for then Wickedneſs would be leſs frequent, and wicked Men not ſo numerous.

Cho. O *Family of* Atreus, *how great and many Miſeries have ye undergone? And how at length by this preſent Stroke have ye, with much difficulty, regain'd your entire Liberty?*

4 AP 54

FINIS.